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LETTERS

TO

W. WILBERFORCE, Esq. M.P.

To which is added

AN ANSWER

TO

MELANCTHON,

HIS VINDICATOR;

**Demonstrating the inconsistency of a Protestant Christian, and
the impolicy of a British Legislator, in advocating
the Roman Catholic Claims.**

BY

AMICUS PROTESTANS.

**" O for that warning voice which he who saw
" Th' Apocalypse, heard cry in Heaven aloud."
MILTON.**

London:

**PRINTED FOR W. SIMPKIN AND R. MARSHALL,
Stationers' Hall Court, Ludgate Street.**

1822.

LETTERS

OF

THE

THE

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T. PLUMMER, Jun.
Paternoster Row.

TO THE
RIGHT HON. VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH,
 &c. &c. &c.

MY LORD,

THE "Writ of ease," which you have recently obtained from that long and laborious course of Duty, which has at once been honourable to yourself, and advantageous to the Public, is not likely to be succeeded by an inglorious inactivity, or to induce insensibility upon those subjects of National interest, which have, for some time past, awakened the energies, and called forth the resources, of no ordinary mind.

Among topics of this description, the Question of THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CLAIMS—as it embraces points, involving the preservation of the Constitution, in Church and State, and the security of the Nation at large—has received no inconsiderable share of your Lordship's attention.

From the first agitation of this important subject, you have earnestly recommended a steady adherence to the long-tried policy of Protestant England, in reference to the exclusion of her Roman Catholic subjects, from all participation in Legislative, and Executive power.

While such a course of conduct has appeared to myself, and many others, to deserve the gra-

titude and applause of the Present Age, and of Posterity; as forming the surest protection of the Throne, the best bulwark of the Church, and the highest happiness of the People—the departure from such a line of policy, by other Senators, may —without the most distant intention to impugn their motives; even in cases where we should least expect to witness such aberrations—form a legitimate subject for Examination and Discussion.

I venture to offer to the Public, under the sanction of your Lordship's name, the following attempt to demonstrate the inconsistency of Protestant Christians, and the impolicy of British Legislators, in advocating the Roman Catholic Claims; not in the vain hope of averting any honest criticism on the performance itself, by taking shelter under the wing of Patronage, but as knowing no one, to whom the cause, which I imperfectly advocate, could more confidently look for continued protection and support, than to the illustrious, and respected Individual whom I address.

I have the honour to be,

MY LORD,

Your Lordship's

Most obedient and faithful Servant,

THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

THE following Letters to Mr. WILBERFORCE, appeared successively in the MORNING POST Newspaper, between the 22d March, and the 6th July, 1821; during part of which period, the Question of the Roman Catholic Claims was under discussion in Parliament, and when those Claims received from that eminent and estimable Individual, not merely (as had been the case before) the less ostensible support of his silent VOTE, but the unequivocal sanction of his public ARGUMENTS. The result of the discussions of that Session, is well known to have been—the passing of the Roman Catholic Relief Bills, by the House of Commons; and their subsequent rejection, by the House of Lords. During the publication of these Letters, another Writer, under the signature of MELANCTHON, appeared in the same Paper, in vindication of Mr. WILBERFORCE, and of the Romish Claims, to which Letters it appeared necessary that some Reply should be given; but as it would have been unreasonable to expect of any Public Journalist, that he should keep alive a controversy of this nature, by inserting any further correspondence on the subject—a promise was given by the Writer of the First Letters, that in the event of

their appearing in another form, the arguments of MELANCTHON, should then receive the attention which they appeared to merit.

To redeem that pledge—is the object of the present publication : the delay which has arisen in its appearance is referable to circumstances, over which the Writer had no controul, and the detail of which, would be unlikely to interest the Public. He can conscientiously declare, that Controversy, on any subject, is not an atmosphere congenial either with his feelings, or his habits, and if he know any thing of himself, he believes he may adopt the language of MONTESQUIEU, “ Je n’ai point naturellement l’esprit “ desapprobateur.” It is not, however, merely in reference to the arena, and the dust, of any particular Controversy, that he would apply to himself the observation of that celebrated Writer ; but he wishes to adopt it more especially with regard to Him, with whom he, unhappily, finds himself chiefly in collision upon this important subject. Not only does he feel that Disputation in general, is at best a painful, and frequently a useless thing ; but least, and last, did he ever expect to find himself in the Lists with the excellent and amiable Man to whom these Letters are addressed. He will yield to no one living—not even to the most personal friend, or the warmest eulogist, of that distinguished character—in the veneration with which he regards him as a Christian, and the esteem in

which he holds him as a Man—in respect for his superior talents ; and in admiration of his numerous virtues—and he trusts that, if in the conduct of the following argument, any single expression, which may appear to be of too ardent, or forcible a character, should have escaped him, in reference to that esteemed Individual, this unfeigned declaration may be admitted as evidence of the Writer being really actuated by no other motives than those of the most profound respect, (and may he be permitted to add) of the most heartfelt attachment.—It must not, however, be forgotten, that while occasions may arise, in which even the humblest Individual may consider it his duty to put on record a public protest, upon public principles ; however repugnant such a step may be to his taste—or even adverse to his feelings—so the mistakes, or errors, of exalted characters, are likely to be injurious and fatal, precisely in proportion to their acknowledged usefulness, and their extensive influence.—It cannot be disguised, that while such Men, in the sober exercise of their talents, and the steady prosecution of their duties, may continue to accumulate new blessings on the Public, and to acquire fresh laurels for themselves ; it is THEY also who have it more peculiarly in their power to effect mischief upon an extensive scale ; and, by some splendid act of irreparable error, to dissolve those long existing obligations, which a grateful Nation was not backward to acknow-

ledge, and would not have been hasty to forget. The wisest of men has observed—"Dead flies cause the ointment of the Apothecary to send forth a stinking savour—so doth a little folly, him that is in reputation for wisdom and honour."

It is under a strong conviction that some aberration of this nature required public notice, in the case before us, that the Letters in question have appeared.—In what manner their Writer may have executed his intention, must remain for the Public alone to decide; but one consolation, "no man taketh from him,"—an honest conviction, that, it has been only a stern and imperative sense of Duty to his Church, and his Country, which has induced a Professor of the same Religious principles, as the respected Individual whom he has addressed, and a sincere admirer of his public and private character, to present this humble remonstrance against a line of conduct, which has appeared to him to be fraught with results of the most fatal and pernicious tendency to the Nation at large, and to her Religious Establishment in particular.

LETTERS

TO

WILLIAM WILBERFORCE, Esq. M. P.

LETTER I.

DEAR SIR,

I TRUST that while as a Protestant Legislator you feel so sensibly alive to the claims of the Roman Catholics; you will also remember that there are such things as PROTESTANT CLAIMS; and I hope that while you are stretching out your arms in such a comprehensive embrace as to take in the Africans, Hottentots, and Laplanders, you will not forget that Charity, to be worth any thing, must "begin at home," and that it is possible for creatures of our limited capacities, when we would stretch our powers in the pursuit of distant good, to overlook the claims of our own countrymen, and be insensible to the wants of our nearer kindred.

I apprehend, Sir, that as a Protestant subject, I have at least as good a claim to the attention and protection of Protestant Legislators, as any Roman Catholic can shew; but as "no man can serve two masters," I believe that no Protestant Legislator can serve us both, whatever he may pretend, or design; and therefore, that since the Roman Catholic is not the only claimant, although he may be the most clamorous, a Protestant Legislator is bound to chuse between our contending

claims. As a member of the Church of England, I consider that in addition to the ordinary claims, which I possess to the protection of Legislators in general, I have a right to look, in a more especial manner, to those of their number who profess to walk more peculiarly by the light and rule of those Sacred Scriptures upon which the Church of England is founded, and who also profess to regard the religious freedom we have so long enjoyed as the inalienable birthright of Englishmen. As a Protestant Father, I possess, perhaps, as strong a claim, that the Protestant Constitution in Church and State, which I inherit from my ancestors, should descend to my children, as I have that my property should be enjoyed by them; and in the same degree that Religion is better than money, I may perhaps be excused for feeling this question strongly without being stigmatised as a bigot. I can prove, that while things remain as they are, and the tolerant Church of England keeps her place, I and my children must be safe, and may worship God as we chuse, under the protection of our ancient laws; but you, Sir, cannot prove, that if the original landmarks and bulwarks of the Constitution should be annihilated, and the portion of legislative and executive power which you claim for Roman Catholics should be conceded, the same toleration and protection will continue to be ours. At best, therefore, you are forcing upon me, as an affectionate adherent of the Church of England, and upon those of the same communion who are near and dear to me, an experiment, which, if it should perchance prove perfectly harmless, can place us in no better situation, *religiously*, than we are in at present, whatever it may do for the Roman Catholics *politically*; but if your experiment (which, to say the least of it, is a most hazardous one) should deceive your hopes, the Religious Public may look for indemnity in vain, when all the seductive influence of your ingenious (or as Mr. CANNING called it—*delightful*) speech, shall have evaporated for ever.

In the event of a disastrous issue to the golden hopes, both of Spiritual and Secular Policemen, it is evident that all the fair and well-earned fame which you have acquired from the liber-

ation of the Africans, will be completely overthrown by the way in which you will now inadvertently have forwarded the subjugation of Europeans, in the revival of that ancient and degrading system of Ecclesiastical tyranny from which the Reformation and the Revolution delivered us; and all the advantages which a distant quarter of the globe will have gained in its deliverance from temporal bondage, will be more than counterbalanced by the spiritual shackles which you will have unwittingly contributed to forge for Christian Europe.

Your name, Sir, so far from going down, in that case, to our children with the blessings of our Protestant Church and Empire upon it, will descend to them only as a melancholy proof how far a well merited popularity may be abused at the very zenith of its elevation; and how easily a Senator who has deserved well of his country, may outlive his acknowledged usefulness, and by one grand and irreparable error, neutralise and desecrate the patriotic labours of a whole political life. I mean no idle compliment when I say, that the influence of your name and character is deservedly great and extensive; but in the same proportion that such an influence may be exerted for our common happiness, in no less a degree will that influence be perilous and fatal, if any fundamental departure from the sound and well tried policy of British legislation should be the consequence of the course, which, after much of hesitation and doubt, you have at length determined to pursue. The errors of a private person (says Mr. BURKITT, in his funeral sermon for GURNALL) are like the defects of a pocket watch, which only affect an individual, but when persons of eminent station and character are mistaken, it is like the town-clock going wrong—it misleads a multitude.

It is easy to conceive how Men, who do not either understand or feel the value of Religious Truth, and the importance of contending for it, should with one consent, determine to dismiss from this question every thing which affects its religious bearings, but that you and certain of your Religious friends should descend from the ground upon which LUTHER of old, and in more modern times, your own friend, Dean MILNER

stood; that you should forget the noble army of English martyrs who have bled for that reformed faith which we now profess, and should lose sight of the great and eternal distinction which subsists between the two Religions of the Church of Rome and the Church of England, appears inexplicable upon your own avowed principles. As this distinction, however, has never been adverted to by you in the late discussions, I propose to make it the subject of my next letter. I am, dear Sir,

Your most obedient and faithful Servant.

AMICUS PROTESTANS.

LETTER II.

DEAR SIR,

It has appeared to me one of the most extraordinary circumstances connected with the discussion of the Roman Catholic Claims, both in the great Council of the Nation and in general society, that so little stress should have been laid upon the fundamental difference which subsists between the Protestant and Roman Catholic religions. In the Upper House of Parliament, even Prelates themselves have omitted all notice of the subject of RELIGION, and conducted their argument against those Claims, as if the point under discussion were simply reducible to a *mere question of human policy*; while in the Lower House, we have seen Statesmen, avowedly attached to a Protestant Establishment, and personally connected with its principal Members, pursue the same secular line of argument, and treat the Roman Catholic Claims as if they were wholly unconnected with the question of Religion, and as if Protestants might still keep their own Religion whole and entire, even although the Roman Catholics should succeed in their present object.

Nor is this all—not only do many Senators, who on other occasions uniformly support the established order of things, join, as with one consent, in sinking the question of Religion, when “Catholic Emancipation” is the theme, but certain cha-

acters also who are sensibly alive to the interests of humanity, and jealous of the rights of their kind ; and above all, even some who (like yourself) profess more particularly to act under the influence of Religious principle, both in public and private life, appear alike to lose sight of the essential distinction which subsists between a Religion which is founded on the Scriptures of truth, and one which is built, in the main, upon human authority—between a Religion of toleration and charity, and one of intolerance and cruelty. The indifference thus manifested on the Religious part of this question is not confined to the ranks of legislation, or to the higher circles of society, but the same apathy prevails more or less among the middle classes; and in many instances, where personal piety adorns the individual character, and where the strongest proofs of the practical influence of real Religion on the heart and conduct are displayed; even here, the distinction between the Spiritual Religion of the Bible, and a Religion of external forms, is scarcely recognised; and good men in the simplicity of their hearts are willing to believe that this distinction may safely be laid out of the question in the consideration of the Roman Catholic Claims, fondly imagining that if their fellow Protestants would only be candid and liberal enough to concede those Claims, the Roman Catholics would be candid and liberal enough, in their turn, to permit Protestants to worship God according to the dictates of their own consciences. This mode of treating the question, must either proceed upon an assumption that no radical and essential difference really exists between the two creeds, or else that such difference has no bearing upon the question of the required concessions.

Now the plain matter of fact is, that there is an original distinction between Protestantism and Popery, over which the lapse of ages and the influence of civilization have had no control—the Romish religion being no other than a modification of the ancient idolatry of Heathenism; and with regard to the opinion that the difference of the two creeds does not affect the question of the Roman Catholic Claims, the following con-

sideration will shew that such difference affords a strong argument against conceding those claims. Every false or corrupt religion is a sanguinary and persecuting religion. It was so with the religion of Heathenism, as the character of the Heathen wars before Christianity, and of the Heathen persecutions after its introduction, sufficiently testifies. Now, such has been remarkably the case with the Romish Religion, which from its earliest period has been a Religion of bloodshed and of bigotry; in proof of which fact, its whole history might be cited, but the present space will only permit the enumeration of a few instances; such as the Papal wars in Italy fomented and perpetuated by the pretended successors of the PRINCE of PEACE—the civil wars in France, which lasted a whole century, and which are so ably recorded by DAVILA—the continental wars of Germany, France, and Flanders, as recorded by DE THOU—the massacre of St. Bartholomew in Paris and the Provinces, for which the Pope of that day solemnly returned public thanks to Almighty God in the Cathedral of St. Peter—the cruelties of the Duke of ALVA, and of the Jesuits in the Low Countries—the horrors which followed the Revocation of the Edict of Nantz by that splendid scourge of Protestant Europe, LOUIS XIV.—the abominable cruelties of the Inquisition in Spain, Portugal, and elsewhere, from the earliest period of its establishment—the martyrdoms of England in the reign of PHILIP and MARY—the appalling conspiracy of the 5th of November, and the other sanguinary plots of the Reigns of ELIZABETH and JAMES I.—the atrocious and extensive massacre of the Protestants in Ireland in the Reign of CHARLES I., as recorded by Sir JOHN TEMPLE—and the Irish Rebellion in 1798, whose main object was undoubtedly and avowedly the extinction of Protestantism, and which was founded and conducted by the Romish Priests, as authenticated, beyond all controversy, by Sir RICHARD MUSGRAVE in his History of that rebellion. In all these abominable cruelties, the mystical woman of the Apocalypse has trodden in the track of her heathen precursor; and in either case, their footsteps have been marked with blood:

If modern Rome has not caused her children, like the ancient idolaters, to pass through the fire to Moloch, she has not, on that account, slain fewer in other ways, and the sanguinary rites of the ancient superstition have only given place to the immolation of human victims in another form, though not on a less extensive scale.

It is not difficult to understand upon what principle a false Religion should become the scourge and plague of the true one. The contrariety of darkness and light will furnish us at once with a clue out of this labyrinth—the virulent enmity of the human heart in its natural state, and its uniform opposition to truth and holiness, will sufficiently account for the dislike evinced by the wordly and the profane, at the exhibition of these qualities in others; Vital Religion is in itself a silent but effectual reproach and condemnation of those who want it; and the remark of the Lawyers to CHRIST will serve to unveil the secret motives of their hostility:—"Master, thus saying, thou reproachest us also." The only reason of the hatred and malignity of many persons against spiritual religion is, that they are any thing else than spiritual themselves. The splendid miracles and faultless life of our Saviour himself, when they failed to convince and convert the majority of his own countrymen, only excited a resentment which ended in their crucifying the Lord of life and glory; and thus, as he himself declared, if his real disciples had been "of the world, the world would have loved his own; but because they were not of the world, but he had chosen them out of the world, therefore the world hated them." The same principle accounts for the first murder on record: "CAIN," says the Holy Scripture, "slew his brother, because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous;" and "as then, he that was born after the flesh, persecuted him that was born after the spirit, even so it is now." If in so many historical instances as have been adduced above, (and more might easily be added), the investing of a false and corrupt Religion with power has ever had a hostile operation upon the lives and liberties of men, we have no reason to distrust the evidence of antiquity on such a subject, and

to reject the lights of history in favour of an experiment for which preceding ages have already paid the costly price of a terrible and fatal experience. I shall enlarge on this point in my next, and am, dear Sir, your faithful Servant.

AMICUS PROTESTANS.

LETTER III.

DEAR SIR,

THAT the Romish religion is one and the same as it has ever been, and that its *immutability* is as well secured as its *infallibility*, we have the testimony, I will not say of its foes, but of its best and warmest friends; and when in addition to this evidence (drawn from no hostile source) we consider the late Manifesto of the Roman Catholic Bishops in the Netherlands against the toleration of Protestants—the violent rescripts of the present POPE against Bible Societies, and against all translations of the Bible in the vernacular tongues—the revival, by the same authority, of the Inquisition, that monstrous engine of persecution and tyranny—and the restoration, by the same power, of the Jesuits, who were the earliest foes of the Reformation, and have been ever since the most indefatigable instruments of a corrupt and persecuting Church—it is impossible to doubt that Popery is what Popery was, and, of course, that its resumption of legislative or executive power, in a Protestant State, must be followed by the same consequences as have always attended it. That, in the present state of the world, those consequences may display themselves precisely in the same form as they once did, is by no means meant to be asserted; the fires which translated RINLEY and LATIMER from their dungeon in Oxford to their rest in Heaven, are not likely to be lighted again; nor is it probable that those Papal atrocities which have spared neither age nor sex in so many parts of civilized Europe, will, in the present age of the world, be renewed in our own country. There are, however, other ways in which a Religion of dark-

ness and intolerance can make itself known and felt; in opening our prisons and shutting our places of worship—in enforcing laws which yet remain upon our Statute book, or in enacting new ones which may supply their deficiencies—in imposing restraints upon conscience, and exacting oppressive fines as the punishment of resistance—in abridging the religious rights of the nation, and silencing the faithful Ministers of Divine truth—in refusing the Bible to the people, and opposing the Society which distributes it; these and various other political expedients for “healing the deadly wound of the Beast,” by “making war on the Saints,” with whose blood a corrupt and apostate Church has so long been “drunk,” will not long be wanting if ever the question of “Catholic Emancipation” (as it has been perversely and sophistically termed), shall be carried; and how those persons in particular, whether in Parliament or elsewhere, who (in common with yourself), affect to set peculiar value on their Religious privileges, and some of whom are the ornaments of the Religion they profess, can advocate the cause of those claims, and espouse the side of an intolerant and bigoted Church, appears inexplicable upon any grounds, and evinces a palpable inconsistency, amounting to infatuation of the first order.

Such a line of conduct displays a short-sighted policy which, under the garb of charity, liberality, and candour, is at variance with the first principles of self-preservation, and is opposed to the obvious interests of a Protestant Church and Empire; indeed, it is such a course of action as ought to induce yourself and others, on reference to its inevitable results, to ask yourselves in all seriousness, whether, if the Bible be true, and the records of History authentic, you are not examples of the greatest inconsistency which can be displayed by rational agents. You are at once the unfeigned lovers of rational freedom, and yet the unwitting advocates of the purest despotism—the friends of Religious toleration, and yet the Patrons of an Intolerant Church—the professors of pure and undefiled Religion, and yet anxious to give credit and influence and power to a corrupt and unscriptural faith; you

profess to be guided by evidence, and are incessantly calling for fresh facts, and yet are resisting the light of universal history, and are still untaught by the accumulated wisdom of ages; "ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." It is to such characters, estimable in themselves, but acting under false impressions, and propagating error by the influence of respectable names, that I would say—be wise in time, and if the Religion of the Romish Church be both dishonourable to God, and injurious to man, take care how you incur the terrible responsibility of aiding such a Religion in its present object of making and administering laws in a Protestant Commonwealth. If such a creed be in its nature sanguinary, and secular, intolerant, and exclusive—I intreat you to look to it that Persecution do not rear her head again under your auspices. If the Religion in question be one whose main object is to keep the world in utter ignorance, and the soul in carnal security, to satisfy the conscience with external opiates, and to supersede the necessity of personal holiness; beware how you lend a helping hand to set up the spiritual abominations of Popery, lest those who come after you should rue the day in which you hazarded an experiment of accommodation, for which you had no warrant either in the example of your Protestant ancestors, or in any modern facts which might have proved the Religion of the Church of Rome to be a more scriptural thing now than it was in the reign of JAMES II.

I am dear Sir, your very faithful Servant,

AMICUS PROTESTANS.

LETTER IV.

DEAR SIR,

I apprehend that a positive identity has been established by Dr. MIDDLETON in his "Conformity between Paganism and Popery," and by Dr. GALE in his "Court of the Gentiles," between the worship of false gods, as exhibited in

the Pagan and Papal Religions, and the worship of the true God, as revealed in the Religion of the Holy Scriptures. It is easy to understand upon what principle the Idolatry and Superstitions of Paganism were at first adopted, and are still continued, by the Church of Rome; they present something tangible and visible for the external senses to rest upon, in the place of that spiritual Religion which the Bible, in all its parts, supposes as essential to salvation. Christianity, in its pure and primitive structure, had no charms for those Pagans who had been accustomed to an imposing exterior of forms and ceremonies, which, while they amused their minds, and pacified their consciences, required no particular sacrifices, and left them in undisturbed possession of their former pleasures. The Church of Rome, aware of this fact, entered accordingly into a compromise with the old Idolatry. Her object was secular dominion, and while this might be attained, she regarded the illumination and conversion of the world but as secondary objects, or rather as things more likely to obstruct her schemes of worldly policy than to advance them. No writer has better established this fact than the celebrated GALE, who, after proving, with extensive erudition, how Paganism and Popery symbolized in a variety of particulars, observes, "The carnal professors of Christianity, who were most numerous, were not content to part with their Pagan rites; wherefore to compromise the matter, they turned their Pagan rites into Christian solemnities, and so christened their Dæmon festivals under the name of some Christian Martyr and Saint; and that which made this design more plausible, was this—some groundless hopes, by such symbolizing with the Pagans, to gain them over to embrace the Christian Religion, *which vain attempt was so far blasted by God, as that it proved but a door to let in Antichrist and all his Idol worship into the Church of Rome.*" Human nature being the same in every age, there is no doubt that the Idolatries and Superstitions of the Romish Church have, from the earliest period of her history, had the force of retaining within her visible pale a vast majority in succession, who, if they had not been nominal Chris-

tians, would have been professed Infidels, but who found in the round of External and Pharisaical observances which Popery prescribes, a sedative for their fears, and a substitute for their piety. The Reformed Churches of the Continent and of this country have protested with vigour and effect against a system which, while it is eminently calculated to amuse the multitude by a specious exterior, is no less adapted to hold them in spiritual bondage by blinding their minds, and sensualizing their hearts—by giving them the shadow of Religion, instead of its substance—and by setting up a variety of Idols in the place of the one, true, and living God of the Scriptures.

The perilous nature of the Romish religion to its members is great indeed, since the very foundation of her whole system is laid in the virtual rejection of the two first commands in the Decalogue. That multitudes who live and die in the communion of the Church of Rome, do yet escape the contagion of their own creed, and are preserved by the special grace of GOD, sincere and exemplary Christians, is most readily admitted; but it is no less true, that the whole machinery of the system erected by that Church is opposed to the Scriptures of truth, and only designed to exalt the authority of a Secular Priesthood, and to keep the Laity in ignorance and error. Whatever, Sir, of charity and liberality towards Roman Catholics may be contended for in your speeches, I here challenge you to deny that the Church of Rome has engrafted on the native stock of Christianity the most awful depravation of doctrine, and has overspread the world at large with a proportionate corruption in practice.

The doctrine of PAPAL INFALLIBILITY, for example, is too monstrous for endurance, when we observe the errors which the POPES have committed, and the vices in which they have indulged; while that of PAPAL SUPREMACY is too gross, either for wise Statesmen, or true Patriots to admit with safety to their country. The SPIRITUAL POWER exercised by the Romish Clergy (each of whom is the Pope of his own district), is equally at variance with good sense and sound reasoning.

The doctrine of PURGATORY accords no better with the constant declaration of Scripture, that the present is a state of probation, and the future of retribution. The doctrine of Papal or Priestly ABSOLUTION, is only an usurpation by man, of a power which belongs to his Creator; while that of Papal or Priestly INDULGENCES affords sanction and toleration for every species of crime. The terrors of EXCOMMUNICATION and ANATHEMA are the mere engines of temporal power, assumed for secular purposes alone. The doctrine of TRANSUBSTANTIATION is an invention, by which a mystery was introduced into the simplest institution, in order to enforce the necessity, and exalt the authority of a standing Priesthood. AURICULAR CONFESSION, in enabling the Ministers of religion to penetrate into the secrets of families and individuals, tends above every other expedient, to consolidate their power, and to multiply their resources. The DENIAL of the BIBLE to the COMMON PEOPLE is an evident mark of the departure of that Church from the truths which it revealed, and the best proof of the weakness of a system which resorts to such a measure. The attempts of that Church to mix HUMAN TRADITION with Divine Revelation, are utterly unjustifiable. By thus putting their own gloss and comment upon the Scripture, they virtually invalidate the sanctions, and evade the force, of the word of God himself. The PROFANATION OF THE SABBATH is a characteristic of Popery, wherever that religion prevails; and the VIOLATION OF THE MARRIAGE Vow is almost identified with the same system. We see a Religion of forms, processions, ceremonies, and externals, usurping the place of that Faith, which produces the fruits of Holiness, without which, the Religion of every man is vain. PRAYERS AND INVOCATIONS OFFERED TO SAINTS, many of whom have been canonized by the Romish Church, after lives of open and notorious sin, are as repugnant to reason as they are contrary to Revelation. The immoral and profligate LIVES of the CATHOLIC CLERGY, as a body, chiefly arising out of their self-imposed celibacy, are a grievous scandal, which is thus described by PINKERTON. "The conscience is seared by the

practice of absolution; and the mind becomes reconciled to the strangest of all phenomena—theoretic piety, and practical vice united in bonds almost indissoluble.” Such are the men to whom power is now to be given in England and Ireland, and who are to be paid from English Taxation.

I wish then to ask, with such facts as these before your eyes, what you and your Religious friends can promise yourselves, or the cause of Truth, by the support of the Roman Catholic claims? why are you not rather found on the side of the Ark of GOD, in times when your ancient foes are unusually vigilant and active?—“If BAAL be GOD, follow him; but if the Lord be GOD, then follow him.”—My next will have reference to the ancient policy of Protestant England.

I am, dear Sir, your faithful Servant,

AMICUS PROTESTANS.

LETTER V.

DEAR SIR,

The Roman Catholic Question is no longer one of a merely speculative nature, nor are the interests which it involves of a secondary or subordinate character. The state of suspense and jeopardy in which the Protestant Church of England has now for some time been periodically placed by Romish Politicians, and Latitudinarian Professors, cannot, in all human probability, continue long. The claims of the Roman Catholics, if not peremptorily resisted by those who bear the name of Protestants, will eventually be carried by those who bear something more than the name of their own faith, and who are heartily in earnest in advancing its interests, and acquiring for it the power which it has lost. When a certain illustrious Statesman complains, in every succeeding Session, that Parliament is troubled by the constant recurrence of a question, of which it would be very desirable to hear no more, and then stately ranges himself on the side of the Roman Catholics, is it possible that he should really feel any

surprise that Parliament continues to be so assailed, when he and his friends are virtually inviting this periodical discussion, by declining to protest at once against these concessions? and would there not be somewhat more of consistency in the Government making a stand, and rallying round a Protestant Constitution upon Protestant principles, as Sir THOMAS LETHBRIDGE, and Mr. BUTTERWORTH have publicly advised in the House of Commons?

It is easy to see that if certain eminent characters are determined only to regard this question as one of mere human policy, without permitting the paramount consideration of Religion; I mean the radical and fundamental difference between the two Creeds—to form a part of their calculations, or to influence their conclusions, so long are they leaving out of the debate one of the most important features which can properly belong to it. So long as this great question is merely to be argued upon principles of expediency, it is no matter of surprise that certain sagacious Statesmen of our times are taken in their own craftiness, and that they are unable, under their own mode of treating the subject, to deal with arguments which are at least as plausible, if not as valid, as their own. They should take higher ground, and resolve to stand by the Constitution, which will then stand by them.

“Dent operam Consules ne quid detrimenti capiet Respublica.”

CICERO.

If they would consent to reason about the religious abominations, and political evils, of the Church of Rome, as did Queen ELIZABETH, and King WILLIAM, Lord BURLEIGH, and Lord BACON, Sir WILLIAM TEMPLE, and Lord CLARENDON, Sir MATTHEW HALE, and Bishop BURNET, and (though last not least), as Dr. WATTS, and Dr. DODDRIDGE did, their difficulties would vanish at once; they would then stand firmly on the rock which the providence of GOD, and the wisdom of their ancestors, have placed under their feet; nor would all the sophistry of crafty and designing men avail to move them.

from the true interests of our Protestant empire, or induce them to yield one inch of that sacred ground for which our Martyrs have bled at the stake, and our Warriors have triumphed in the field. If tranquillity and union be their object, let them take a Statesman-like view of this great question in all its breadth and length, and consider, that although a temporary truce may be obtained, by conceding to Roman Catholics a portion of civil and political, of legislative or executive power, yet that such characters must be traitors to their own church and cause, if they could rest satisfied with a moderate share of that power, or with acts of mere neutrality, the consequence of which would necessarily be, that the real Protestants of this country (I do not mean the nominal ones,) who are far too enlightened, and too free, to breathe in the polluted atmosphere of a Religion of darkness, and much less to witness patiently its daily encroachments, or submit to its galling yoke, would soon be found more troublesome and less tractable than the Roman Catholics themselves. If the people of this country could not endure the exhibition of the Heathen abominations of Popery, at the great epochs of the Reformation and the Revolution: much less can they endure them now, when a greater degree of Religious light is diffused over the nation, and the principles of civil liberty are better understood than ever. It is unnecessary, and would be inexpedient, to describe the inevitable result of conflicting sentiments called into operation under a new state of things; but I would say to "the Powers that be," who are at present honoured and beloved by all those whose esteem is worth possessing—be true to your Country and yourselves; be content to retain the affection, and to ensure the support, of those men who have stood by you in the day of trial, while God has graciously stood by us all. Do not desert the best friends of the Church and the State in favour of those who cannot, on their own principles, be the friends of either, if once they are put to choose between their own Church and ours. Take courage to resist the experiment of Political Empirics, who, while they magnify the virtues of their own panacea, have only in view

the furtherance of particular interests, or the aggrandizement of a Secular Church; who cannot be supposed, without treason to their own exclusive system, to feel any regard for England, its Laws, or its Religion; and who will be the first to laugh at the criminal folly which shall suffer itself to be persuaded into the surrender of those privileges, which, however easily conceded, will not be so easily resumed.

To yourself, Sir, and to such of your RELIGIOUS friends both in and out of Parliament, as are doing what in you lies to raise the members of a false and corrupt Religion into power and influence, and to invest them with dignity and honour, I would say—you are resembling her of whom it was once said by MILTON

—“She open’d—but to shut
Excell’d her pow’r”——

You are opening a door which no man can shut, however we, or our children may hereafter deplore the evil hour in which so terrible an experiment was made. This subject, however must be pursued in my next.

I am, dear Sir,

Your most obedient and faithful Servant,
AMICUS PROTESTANS.

LETTER VI.

DEAR SIR,

My last had reference to the extraordinary conduct of certain Members of his Majesty’s Government.

In whatever way, however, the Members of the Executive Government may deem it wise to act upon this momentous question, I apprehend that the Christian Church will at least expect of yourself, as A PROFESSOR OF RELIGION, long endeared to our hearts by every sacred and social consideration, that you should shew some attention to consistency.

I ask you then, as a Member of the BIBLE SOCIETY, how you can defend the introduction to power of the Members of

that Church, the Head of which (whatever Individuals of such Church may desire or design in favour of the Bible) has never revoked the Bulls against the free dispersion and use of the Holy Scriptures, and who has himself issued a fresh Bull of the most intolerant character against all Bible Societies (including our own), which is in force at the present moment. I ask you, Sir, as a Member of the CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY, and as one with whom it cannot have become a matter of indifference, whether distant nations shall be enlightened by a Protestant Mission, or by the Propaganda College of Rome, whether you can reasonably expect that no obstruction should be offered to the operations of a Society which is deservedly esteemed by you, (and of which you are a Vice-President,) if ever the Church of Rome should attain any considerable accession of power or influence among us. As a Member of the SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE, I ask you, whether it can be a matter of indifference to the Regular Priests, and other Emissaries of the Romish Church, that an Institution, which, in their esteem, is no other than a Society of Heretics, should propagate, at home and abroad, what in their consciences, as good Catholics, they must believe to be only so much Heresy, and that they should never attempt to exert the Parliamentary and private influence they will so soon possess, to "let and hinder" the exertions of such a Society? I ask you, as a Member of THE PRAYER BOOK AND HOMILY SOCIETY, how long you think the English Liturgy will be tolerated by the admirers of the Mass Book, or what sort of defenders that Liturgy may hereafter expect, from the candid latitudinarianism of a half Popish Parliament? I ask you further, how long you expect that the HOMILIES of our Church are likely to be endured, when they protest so strongly and loudly against the errors and abominations of what they, and I, and you, alike believe to be an Apostate, Idolatrous, and Anti-Christian Church? Can language like this, though supported even by the arguments of CRANMER, be long permitted to be circulated by the Homily Society under a new state of things? Our Forefathers, Sir, had

a way of calling things by their right names,* but this is not likely to be long parliamentary or fashionable, should the concessions be granted, for we shall soon find that it is not only uncandid, but *unlawful*, to designate those who will then be our legislators and rulers, by such opprobrious terms as Idolaters and Apostates. I ask, you, Sir, as a Member of THE RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY, how long you think the friends of another Church and cause, will be likely to bear with this great engine of Protestant usefulness? and whether the Irish Priests will be long content merely with anathematizing and burning those Tracts as they now do? How long do you think the Irish Roman Catholic Clergy will tolerate the PROTESTANT SOCIETIES, or the PROTESTANT SCHOOLS, among themselves; and how long are the friends and agents of the Church of Rome likely, on either side of the water, to endure that a Church which they esteem both heretical in her doctrines, and of surreptitious origin, should preserve her present elevation—derive a great part of her revenue from Roman Catholics, and enjoy, without molestation, the tithes and advantages which once belonged and still, as they think, of right, belong to themselves? More especially, I wish to put it to you, whether you really believe, and expect us to believe, that the two Colleges of JESUITS at STONYHURST in England, and at CASTLE BROWNE in Ireland, are there for nothing, and intend to remain quiet spectators of the simplicity which now invites their church to influence and power;—bearing always in mind, that this Order was established, at first, as the professed opponents of the REFORMATION, and after having been publicly suppressed on the remonstrances of all Christian Europe, was revived *by the present Pope*, for the avowed purpose of opposing Protestantism, and exalting Popery?

I could further wish to know, how long you and certain Protestant advocates of the Catholic Claims, (who, though not in Parliament, possess and exert considerable influence on this

“ Je ne puis rien nommer si ce n'est par son nom.”

BOILEAU.

question,) expect that the **CHRISTIAN OBSERVER** will continue to be published, after Roman Catholics shall have taken their seats in Parliament, and the new Ecclesiastical Commission intended to be created by the Relief Bill shall have entered on the discharge of its functions? I am perfectly aware, Sir, that if the Bartlett's Buildings' Society were to-morrow to be sunk to the bottom of the ocean, it would not much afflict the Dissenting interest; and that if the Bible Society, Missionary Society, Religious Tract Society, and "Christian Observer," were to share the same fate, it would as little disturb certain other respectable members of Society; but I address **YOU** on these topics, as hitherto feeling, with a large multitude of my fellow Christians, that the interests of these blessed Societies, and the rights of a Protestant press, were at least safe in **YOUR** hands; and as believing, even now, that you would be the last man on earth knowingly to hurt a hair of our heads. My next will review some of the arguments which have been adduced in favour of your late vote.

I am, dear Sir,

Your most obedient and faithful Servant,

AMICUS PROTESTANS.

LETTER VII.

DEAR SIR,

YOU will probably say, in reference both to the political interests, and the Religious Societies of England, that all my reasoning supposes.—1st. That Roman Catholics still continue to feel the desire to injure Protestants; and 2dly, That the concession of the claims will give them the power to be mischievous; both which points you deny—contending that they are now an altered race of beings, and that, even if it were otherwise, they cannot hurt us if they would. In proof that Roman Catholics are, and must be, the same, I refer you to the **REVIVAL OF THE JESUITS**, and the **RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF THE INQUISITION** by the present **POPE**, both *subsequently to the rejection of Mr. Grattan's Bill*, in 1813, since which

period also, the violent and disgraceful Bull against all Bible Societies was issued from Rome; and the Roman Catholic Bishops of Belgium have also publicly declared that "the existence and privileges of the Catholic Church are incompatible with equal favour and protection being granted to all Religions." In addition to this, I would notice the very intolerant and indefensible conduct of the present POPE towards the Viçar General of Constance, VON WESSENBERG, four years after Mr. GRATTAN's Bill was rejected, as it is detailed at length in the correspondence which took place on the subject between the Court of Rome and the Grand Duke of BADEN, which was first published in German; and afterwards in an English translation, by ACKERMANN, in 1819. I also call your attention to the formal Rescript of the present POPE to all the Cardinals, dated the 5th of February, 1808, containing his decision on a proposal from France for granting the free exercise of Religious Worship to those who dissent from the Romish Communion, in which he observes—"It is proposed that all Religious persuasions should be free, and their worship publicly exercised; but WE HAVE REJECTED THIS ARTICLE as contrary to the Canons, and to the Councils; TO THE CATHOLIC RELIGION, to the peace of human life, and to the welfare of the State, on account of the deplorable consequences which would ensue from it."

The other pastoral Rescripts of the present POPE which are before the public, declaim against the toleration of Protestant worship as pregnant with the most fatal consequences; reproach the French Government for its "protection of Sectaries, Heretics, and Schismatics"—and regard such an indulgence to Protestants as an alliance between "Christ and Belial, light and darkness, truth and error, sincere piety and impiety." He expressly asserts the ancient maxim of Popery, that there is no possibility of salvation out of the Church of Rome (" *Della quale, non vi e speranza di salute.*") He expressly condemns the intermarriage of parties, only *one* of whom is a professor of what he calls "the Christian Faith;" since the Church of Rome (he says) has always strongly reprobated mar-

riages with HERETICS, and held them in abhorrence, for which he further quotes the authority of his predecessor CLEMENT XI.; and again he says, "the same laws which forbid the marriage of " Christians with INFIDELS have also prohibited the sacrilegious nuptials of Catholics with HERETICS.*"

I wish, above all, to call your attention to the unchanged hostility of the Romish Church towards the Religion of the Gospel and its Ministers, which the official and private correspondence of a great Religious Society, with which you are intimately connected (and which it is not necessary for me to name), has evidently shewn to exist upon the Continent during the last ten years. That Society, Sir, has wisely and rightly abstained from publishing, and it never will, or ought to publish, the immense mass of evidence which it has received (without solicitation on its part), upon this subject, but it is impossible, from your connection with that Society, that you can be ignorant that for some years past, the Jesuits and other agents of the Court of Rome have been indefatigable in Germany, and particularly in Bavaria, in persecuting the Church of Christ; you cannot but know (for its Secretaries, both from official duty, and personal friendship, will have informed you, as a Vice-President), that many faithful and laborious Preachers of the Gospel have been silenced by the Court of Rome—that others have been suspended—that some, and not a few, have been imprisoned, and that one, in particular, than whom a brighter ornament of Religion both in public and private life does not exist, has been driven from his country, his congregation, his family, and his friends, to an ignominious exile in Russia. All this is in conformity with the present POPE's proceedings against the Gallican Church, and his deprivation of her Bishops, of which acts the most severe complaints were made. In his less public correspondence, further evidence appears to the same effect. In instructions

* See the POPE's several Rescripts at length, in an important collection, relative to the negotiations between the French Government and himself, published in 1812, by KEATING and Co. Booksellers to the *English Vicars Apostolic*.

addressed by him to his Nuncio at Vienna, in the year 1606, he maintains the pretended right which the Romish Church has ever assumed of **DEPOSING HERETICAL PRINCES**; and he deplores the misfortune of those times which, as he says, prevent the Spouse of **JESUS CHRIST** (the Church) from putting those *holy maxims* into practice, and constrain her to *suspend the course of her just severities against the enemies of the faith*. —[*See Essai Historique sur la Puissance des Papes.*]

To come nearer home.—I entreat you to consider the gross idolatries and degrading superstitions which at this moment abound in Ireland—practices, I venture to assert, which had scarcely their counterpart in heathen lands, and certainly have not a parallel in the darkest regions of Popery at this time—all carried on, be it remembered, under the eye, and with the sanction of the whole Romish Hierarchy and Clergy; and then reflect on the continued opposition in Ireland of the same power (wherever it can be safely displayed) to the Protestant Scriptures, to Protestant exertions, and to Protestant education—and I think it must be admitted, that Popery is neither more enlightened in herself, nor more tolerant towards ourselves than heretofore.

It might indeed have been expected that, from examples like these, both that part of the world which admits, and that part of it which resists, the spiritual dominion of the Pope, would have been admonished, that the Head of that Church, in our own time, is as formidable to the liberty and tranquillity of the world as he was formerly; and that in spite of the pretensions to superior liberality and charity which the Protestant friends of the Church of Rome may make on her behalf at this moment, the same system of darkness and intolerance is in full operation, has lost no part of its distinctive character, has grown no wiser from its misfortunes, and has only lifted its head again, for the purpose of desolating afresh the afflicted and exhausted nations of the earth.

Is, then, the Head of that Church to be courted and coquetted with by the highest authorities of a Protestant State? Or does England, either from ancient history, or recent ex-

perience, imagine that she has any thing to gain, by offering incense at an altar, whose unhallowed fires only excited the indignation and alarm of her forefathers? Rather let us hear the warning voice of a Bishop of our own, when he says—"Of this spiritual tyranny we freed ourselves at the Reformation, and we must guard against its entrance a second time: we must not forget that a UNIVERSAL BISHOP is a thing as much to be dreaded as a UNIVERSAL MONARCH: we must not forget, that as universal empire in temporal concerns is subversive of *civil* liberty, so universal empire in ecclesiastical concerns is subversive of *religious* liberty."

If the above proofs of intolerance and bigotry can be produced by Protestants, does not a heavy *onus probandi* lie on yourself, when you argue (or vote as if you argued) that the Members of the Modern Church of Rome are no longer the same as their forefathers? I wish in all seriousness to put it to you, whether, if it had pleased God to permit events to happen more calculated than others for our admonition, any stronger and better evidences of an unchanged and implacable spirit of hostility on the part of the Church of Rome towards Protestant Europe and Protestant England, could have been afforded by that Church in the short space of a few years (during which, be it remembered, she yet continued a Petitioner for Protestant concessions) than those proofs to which I have alluded?

I shall consider the second point, viz.—How far the concession of the claims will convey the power of annoyance, in my next; and am,

Dear Sir, your most faithful Servant,

AMICUS PROTESTANS.

LETTER VIII.

DEAR SIR,

Before I come to the second point adverted to in my last, I shall adduce a few more modern proofs of the present bigotry and intolerance of the Romish Church and Clergy.

It appears of the last importance that all Protestants who value the Religion of the Holy Scriptures, should observe *the present feelings* of the Romish Church, in reference to their general use and free circulation. In the Bull of the present POPE, the circulation of the Bible is characterised as “an abominable device, by which the very foundation of Religion is undermined.” It is stated to be the duty and object of the See of Rome, “to employ all means for the purpose of detecting, and rooting out such a pestilence in every way.” The Primate of POLAND, to whom this anathema is addressed, is highly commended for his “zeal and activity, under circumstances so threatening to Christianity, in having denounced this *defilement of the faith*, tending to the *imminent peril of souls*,” and he is “earnestly exhorted to execute, daily, whatever he can atchieve by his power, promote by his councils, or effect by his authority, in defeating the plans which the enemies of the Catholic Religion,” are stated to have “prepared for its destruction.” It is further declared to be “the special duty of the Episcopal office to expose the wickedness of such an *abominable scheme*, by shewing, in obedience to the precepts of the Catholic Church, that *the Bible printed by Heretics is to be numbered among other prohibited Books of the Index*.” After which, it is expressly asserted, that “experience has proved, that the Holy Scriptures, when circulated in the vulgar tongue, have, through the temerity of men, *been productive of more injury than advantage*.” For this cause it is declared to be “necessary to adhere to the Decree of 13th June, 1757, which prohibits all versions of the Scriptures in the vernacular tongues, except such as are approved by the Apostolic See, and are published with annotations from the writings of the *Holy Fathers*.” In other words, the only Translations permitted, when Translations are used at all, are such as have been published by the Romish Church, with such interpretations as frequently dilute the strength, and corrupt the purity of the original text ; thus affording a vehicle for conveying such a sense of the Sacred Writings as may perpetuate the errors of the Romish Communion.

In this Modern Papal Anathema, suited as it is to the darkest ages, his Holiness does not stand alone, but finds in those of his Clergy who are now resident in our own Protestant Empire and Metropolis, the most faithful coadjutors; in all which, we are led to observe the co-operation of parts, and the unity of design, which are secured by such a system as induces any persons to denounce the exertions for enlightening the world by the Holy Scriptures. Does the POPE declare that the Bible printed by Heretics, that is, the Protestant version, is a prohibited Book, and that the Scriptures are not to be read in the vulgar tongue?—The Vicar Apostolic, and the Priests of his Communion, now resident in the British Metropolis, inform a British House of Commons, that these are the undoubted dogmas of their Church, and that they are bound by every principle of conscience, and every motive of duty, to act upon them. Bishop POYNTER, the Vicar Apostolic of the London District, in his answer to the Education Committee of the House of Commons, remarks; “ I could not in any manner approve of *any Catholic children reading the Protestant version of the Scriptures;*” because (he says) he should “ act contrary to the constant discipline of the Catholic Church.” He afterwards states that all the Catholic versions *have notes*; so that when the Holy Scriptures are explained by Romish notes and comments, but not otherwise, they may be consulted. Upon being asked, whether the objection to the Protestant version would still occur, if passages were taken *which are exactly the same in the two versions*, he replies, “ *The objections would be the same, although the words were the very same!!!*” He then states, that “ children and the unlearned” (or the poor) “ are *not allowed to read the Scriptures in the vulgar tongue, without the permission of their Pastors.*” He further states, that “ there was never any prohibition at all in the Catholic Church against reading the Scriptures in *Latin*; but all the regulations referred to the *translations in the vulgar tongue*; and the Church,” he adds, “ had two views:—one, that the translation should be such as was authorised by the Catholic Church,” (and we have before seen that there is no authorised translation without Romish notes), “ and

2dly, that they should not be read by those, from whose ignorance or dispositions, the Pastors of the Church had reason to fear that the reading of the Scriptures would be *rather prejudicial than beneficial to them;*" or, as the POPE says in his Bull against the Bible Society, "The Holy Scriptures, in the vulgar tongue, have been productive of *more injury than advantage*"—a blasphemous position, by which the Anti-Christian power of the Apocalypse has placed himself in direct opposition to Him, who has dictated those Scriptures by His unerring Spirit, declared them able to make us "wise unto salvation," and enforced upon all men the paramount duty of searching them. The Romish Vicar Apostolic adds, "*The reading of the Protestant version of the Bible is a point to which I could never give my approbation ;*" and being asked, "Could you allow *any portions* of that version to be selected for the use of Catholic Children?" he says, "No." On being asked, "Whether he could consent, by the instruction of Protestants, to better the moral condition of those Catholic children, whom he had admitted to have fallen into vicious and bad habits, arising from their ignorance;" he replies, "As a Catholic Bishop, I do not judge that their morals could be improved, but by Religious Instruction; and *I could not consent for them to receive it from Protestants;*" and on being asked, "whether he conceived that the Religious Instruction which might be conveyed by teaching them to read the Protestant Scriptures, would not better their Moral condition?" he answers, "Certainly not." The Rev. JAMES BRAMSTON, a Priest, states, first, that "it is not at all the practice to give the Scriptures to the common people without notes;" and secondly, that "the Bull Unigenitus" (the main object of which was to prevent the general use of the Scriptures,) "is still, undoubtedly, in force in the Romish Church." Thus also, the Rev. JAMES ARCHER, another Priest, states, "that he knows of no Catholic version in England without notes;" and that the Priests "think it unsafe for children to be taught even such parts of Scripture as BOTH CHURCHES AGREE UPON, *without notes;*" after which, he still further reduces the chance of a free circulation, by stating,

that “ *even with notes*, the Priests do not sanction the promiscuous reading of the Scriptures, but to such persons as they think will make a good use of them,” which is, to take upon themselves the tremendous responsibility of withholding the Word of God from all persons, whom they, in their wisdom, may deem unfit to possess it.*

The Romish Bishop MILNER, in his charge to his Clergy, dated 30th March, 1813, while he severely reprobates those of his own Communion who join Bible Societies, remarks, “ The promiscuous reading of the Bible is *not calculated, nor intended by God, as the means of conveying Religious instruction to the bulk of mankind.*” Again:—“ It is evidently a much more rational plan to put the Statutes at large into the hands of the illiterate vulgar, telling them to become their own lawyers, than it is to put the text of the mysterious Bible into their hands, for enabling them to hammer their religion and morality out of it.” Again:—“ The Church recommends the reading of the Bible to all who have some tincture of learning, and an adequate knowledge of their Religion, together with the necessary humility and docility to dispose them to *submit their own private opinion, upon all articles of faith, to the belief of the great Church of all nations, and all ages.*” Again:—“ My brethren, I am confident you will *not* encourage, or countenance, the distribution of Bibles, or Testaments, among the very illiterate persons of your congregations, as proper initiatory books of instruction for them.” The same Prelate, in a Letter, in the *Orthodox Journal*, for October, 1813, signed by himself, calls the Bible Society “ *a novel and portentous Institution, unknown to the Fathers and Doctors of past ages;*” and concludes with this remark:—“ It is *evidently impossible to add any notes whatever to the Sacred Text, which will make it a safe and proper elementary book of instruction for the illiterate poor.*”

* See, for the above Extracts, and much valuable information, on this subject, the Report of the Committee of Education to the House of Commons, in June, 1816.

In further proof that the Romish Clergy holds with the POPE, that there is no salvation out of the Romish Church, I add, that Archbishop TROY remarks, in his Pastoral Instruction of 1793; "The Apostles, their disciples, and successors, in every age, have thought it their precise duty to gain proselytes to this *one* faith, to this one society, to this one fold, and have uniformly taught, that *Salvation cannot be otherwise obtained.*" And a greater authority than Dr. TROY, even the present POPE, expressly declares, "that the Roman Catholic Religion, because it is Divine, is necessarily *one, by itself alone*, and can form no alliance with any other." My last proof of the continued intolerance of the Romish Church, is drawn from the new Constitution of the Cortes, proclaimed at Madrid, the 4th of March, 1820. "The Religion of the Spanish Nation, is, and shall be, perpetually the Roman Catholic, THE ONLY TRUE RELIGION. The Nation protects it by wise and just laws, and PROHIBITS THE EXERCISE OF ANY OTHER WHATSOEVER:" and the Oath prescribed for each Member of the Cortes is, "I swear to defend and preserve the Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman Religion, WITHOUT ADMITTING ANY OTHER INTO THE KINGDOM." From these facts I argue that Popery is, what Popery WAS, and that until the contrary can be shewn, Roman Catholics ought not to be Legislators, Privy Councillors, and Members of the Executive Government in the United Kingdom.

I am, dear Sir,
Your most faithful and obedient Servant,
AMICUS PROTESTANS.

LETTER IX.

DEAR SIR,

I am now to consider how far the concession of the claims will convey to Roman Catholics the power of annoyance. It will not be disputed by you, that the required concessions manifestly involve, and necessitate, an extensive sub-

version of the existing bulwarks and fences of a Constitution, which has been hitherto, and still continues, fundamentally Protestant. Let it be admitted, that it is not a matter capable of positive proof (as nothing prospective can be) that the removal of our present safeguards must, of necessity, overthrow the Constitution which they protect, and let it be as readily conceded, that all attempts to anticipate at what period, or in what manner, such an event may be effected, must be equally speculative; I will still however put it to you, as a Christian, and a Statesman, whether it is either a righteous, or a wise measure, (without some stronger necessity existing for it than has been shewn by yourself, or others) to incur a risk which, however it may answer the purpose of a few political adventurers, may possibly end adversely for our Protestant Church and Empire. If, in reference to the Spiritual Church of Christ, you cannot shew that her best interests are likely to be promoted, or her real adherents to be increased, by the proposed changes, but rather, on the contrary, that obstruction, injury, and persecution, are the more natural and probable consequences of this novel and hazardous venture, how fearful is the responsibility which you are now taking upon yourself, when the only parties likely to be benefited by the scheme, are intriguing Jesuits, Irish Adventurers, and English Oppositionists; and when the parties, whose very existence is put to hazard, are no other than the Protestant Church and British Constitution! Put the worst that can happen to your own country upon the present system, and what is it, but that she will lose the possible advantage of the unknown, and untried, services of some Popish Statesman, Warrior, or Judge, who, under existing circumstances, can neither enter the Senate House, preside at the Bench, or attain the highest rank in the Field; but look for a moment at the reverse of that brilliant coinage which great declaimers are now striking from the mint of their own ardent imaginations, in the hope of its passing current through a Protestant Kingdom, and behold a Roman Catholic Cabinet Counsellor, advising a Protestant Sovereign; or a firm believer in the Spiritual authority of a Foreign Poten-

State, exercising any controul over the interests, or administering any portion of the resources, of this great Protestant Empire—see a conscientious member of an intolerant Church legislating for the Evangelical Clergy of England; or a Popish Judge charging a Jury of the country (themselves indifferently of one or the other Creed) in any case affecting the Protestant ascendancy, ecclesiastical or civil. Look outward, to our foreign dependencies, and see the Church Missionary Society and its Ministers subjected to the controul of a Roman Catholic Governor, and though I know it has been said, that Roman Catholics, although *eligible*, will not be *elected*, consider, I pray you, whether, though this *may* not happen under the present Ministry, it *must* not happen under any change of Counsels. Reflect, Sir, I entreat you, on these contradictions, inconsistencies, and absurdities, with any portion of that sound English common sense which Sir WILLIAM TEMPLE, says, is, “after all, the best sense, or it never would have been so common;” and then, how will these anomalies appear? Look a little farther, Sir, and ask yourself—for the Religious part of the Nation is now asking you—how far those Professors of Religion, who feel no more for the fate of our National Religion than some of its Members are now doing, have any right to anticipate the Divine blessing on their (however well intended) at best equivocal, but perhaps unhallowed, labours, and whether they ought not rather to look for the expression of the Divine displeasure upon that senselessness, and apathy, that spurious charity, and misplaced candour, which can shew no better warrant for its movements, and appears only indicative of a forgetfulness of the vast and innumerable blessings, both spiritual and civil, derived to us from the exertions of such reasoners, as HOOKER, SHERLOCK, and JEWEL, or such politicians, as Lord SOMERS, BLACKSTONE, and Serjeant MAYNARD. The ignorance of mercy on the part of rebellious Israel, was the signal for Divine visitation; and surely, if indifference and insensibility, under the full blaze of Religious light and liberty, and a long-continued course of Spiritual privileges, be likely to forfeit the possession of such blessings, the

arguments and votes of certain characters, upon the vital and all-important question of introducing the Roman Catholics to Legislative and Executive Power among ourselves, are eminently likely to produce such results as may convince us of the true nature of our National mercies, by the painful dispensation of their loss—"Forasmuch as this people refuseth the waters of Shiloah that go softly—therefore now behold the Lord bringeth up upon them the waters of the River, strong and many, even the King of Assyria and all his glory." It will be obvious, that this view of the subject can be understood only by such Senators and Statesmen, as profess to be governed by higher principles than those of mere human policy or expediency, but it is to such an one that I am now addressing myself.

I propose in my next to address a few words to those among our Clerical friends who profess, and truly profess, to adhere most nearly in their preaching and practice to the original platform of our National Church, as exhibited in her Articles, Homilies, and Liturgy, and who are yet, most unaccountably, found with yourself on the side of the Romish Church, upon the Roman Catholic Claims.

I am, dear Sir,
Your most obedient and faithful Servant,
AMICUS PROTESTANS.

LETTER X.

DEAR SIR,

IT is no secret that many of the Evangelical Clergy, with whom you are connected, think, with yourself, that the Catholic Claims may be safely conceded. There has been in this case an action and re-action, of which it is idle to disguise that you are the focus and centre, and for which, as it may operate usefully or adversely to the Church of Christ, and to this Protestant Nation, you will either have deserved well of your country, or the reverse. So long as it was doubtful (as for a long time it was) whether YOU were favourable, or adverse,

to the Claims—so long, a vast number of excellent persons who are more or less influenced by your name, and follow in your train, as strongly affected by the purity of your Religious and Moral Character, and the disinterested integrity of your political career, felt it only due to you and to themselves to avoid coming to any positive conclusion either for or against the Claims. While this state of things continued, there was a mixture of good and evil, which left it doubtful on which side the balance preponderated. If the Church and cause of Rome gained nothing from the Evangelical Clergy of the Church of England, the whole injury accruing to our own Church, was the benumbing and paralyzing influence produced by the indecision and silence of so important a part of her body, on a question of this peculiar character. When, however, your sentiments were no longer doubtful, the Clergy, with whom you are more particularly associated, no longer displayed their former diffidence in approaching this question, or the same delicacy in forming a conclusion upon it. Thus much for the action of evil. Its re-action is of this nature:—Finding as YOU now do, many Clergymen on the side of the Claims, of whose value in the Church of CHRIST you have no more doubt, than they have of your value in the State, you take renewed courage from their altered tone, although springing more or less from your own example; and you are thus only the more confirmed in what I cannot but esteem, (with all the respect I unfeignedly bear you) an error of no ordinary magnitude.

I now address myself to those excellent Men, with whom, if my premises be correct, you are thus proceeding in the mutual reciprocation of compliment, and error. I begin by observing, that though unworthy to sit at their feet, I am yet a humble learner in the same school;—that I know and honour their pious and laborious exertions for their Divine Master;—that I desire to live and die in the profession and practice of the truths they promulgate; and, am content, to bear any reproach or shame which may attend the confession I now make, of my having identical views and hopes with themselves,

on the great Scriptural, and Protestant, topics of our common salvation. It is chiefly, however, in reference to those life-giving doctrines, and to my firm conviction that, if the Claims should be conceded, these invaluable, but mistaken, men will not long be permitted to pursue their present course without obstruction of some sort or other, that I am grieved at their late indecision, and their present inconsistency. To such dear and valued friends, I would say, "more in sorrow than in anger,"—be assured, that however truth may tolerate falsehood, it is not in the nature of things that falsehood should tolerate truth. You may (as our Protestant Church will) continue to tolerate Idolatry and Error, however they may increase and abound, under the countenance and credit about to be extended to the Romish Church, but "lay not this flattering unction to your souls,"—that the Members of that Church, when THEY acquire (as sooner or later they must, under the intended concessions) the power of molesting and persecuting Protestants, will abstain from exercising that power, and will then begin, for the first time, to tolerate the pure and reformed faith. To imagine this, will be to shut your eyes upon all the evidence which the history of our own and every other nation presents, and voluntarily to resist the accumulated experience of every age of the Christian Church ever since it had an origin. I venture, then, as a real friend, and in the most friendly spirit, to say to you as JEHU said to King JEHOSEPHAT, "Should'st thou *help the ungodly*, and love them that hate the Lord?" Does it never occur to you, that in the same degree that you are helping the worldly politicians of an Antichristian Church to temporal authority, you may be inflicting such spiritual injury on the true Church, as all your preaching and practice may never repair? There is a holy and becoming fear of injuring the Church of CHRIST, which ought to be more upon your minds than it appears to be, and should dictate a greater caution on the subject of the Claims of the Romanists in your social conferences, and in those periodical publications over which you have controul. I apprehend the language of a Queen on another occasion,

would be somewhat more in harmony with your professions—
 “How can I endure to see the evil that shall come unto my people?”

I shall pursue this address in my next, and am,

Dear Sir, your most obedient Servant,

AMICUS PROTESTANS.

LETTER XI.

DEAR SIR,

I now continue my address to the Evangelical Clergy—I put it to you, who are building your whole Religion on the Divine Word, and on the Articles and Homilies of the Church of England, whether the appeal which you are daily making to those divine records and scriptural formularies, in defence of the truths you teach, can at all consist with, or justify, your present opinion, that any portion of political power or influence, can be safely conceded to men, whose Church has never yet recalled, and whose Head does still enforce, the most unscriptural decrees against the general diffusion of the Bible; and I ask you, whether you conscientiously believe, that a Priesthood, which is solemnly bound by its Ordination vows to prefer the idolatrous and ungodly decrees of the Council of Trent to the Articles and Homilies of our Reformed Church, and which Priesthood is no less called upon to act in the persecuting spirit of the Anathemas of that Council against all who profess another faith—whether I say such a Priesthood can find its Laity in the seats of legislation, of judicature, of authority, and of influence, without straining every nerve to oust you of what they must esteem your usurped benefices, your unjustly acquired revenues, and your ill-merited popularity. But the resumption of *political power* by the adherents of an unscriptural Church, is not the whole of our danger. I will even for the sake of the argument suppose they never can attain such power: I would, however, ask—Is influence nothing? Is opinion nothing? Is that candid generalization to go for nothing, which

is even now so prevalent, as to induce all the advocates of the Claims, whether Religious Professors or otherwise, to argue as if there were no essential difference between two Creeds, which are as much opposed to each other as heaven and earth, or as light and darkness? Will it form hereafter no impression on the minds of the bulk of our people in favour of the doctrines of the Church of Rome, when they know that such Senators as Mr. WILBERFORCE, and such Preachers as yourselves, saw nothing to apprehend upon spiritual grounds, and anticipated no danger to the Reformed Church, from extending the influence, and strengthening the hands of the Romish Clergy and Laity? How can it be, while the Church of Rome, and while human nature, remain the same, but that the great Protestant Doctrine of Justification by faith only, (or that which LUTHER called the "*Articulus vel stantis vel cadentis Ecclesiæ*"), should receive a fatal wound at the hands of its friends, when even you, who are its avowed champions, are for raising those to eminence and place, whose whole system—spiritual and secular—is founded upon the open denial of that great fundamental doctrine of the Bible, and the Reformation? How can it be thought hereafter, that you saw any great evil in bowing before Images, or in believing that a morsel of bread was GOD, and in worshipping it accordingly, when you had contributed to place those men over your heads and our own, whose fellow-worshippers brought our fathers to the stake, only for declaring, that bowing before graven Images, and the consecrated Host, was nothing less than Idolatry? I ask you, then, in the expressive language of Scripture, "Will YE plead for Baal? will YE save him?" Let those at least abstain from contributing to set up "the man of sin" in his temporal character, who have no right to expect (with all the history of the Church and the world against them) that they can help forward such an event, without at the same time, advancing his spiritual ascendancy, and giving credit and currency to his unscriptural abominations.

Another query which I would suggest for your consideration is—what sort of return is afforded for the blessings of the Re-

formation, by the Protestant advocates of the Roman Catholic Claims?—If HOOPER and LAMBERT—if CRANMER and LATIMER, when “they loved not their lives unto the death”—or if the seven Bishops in King JAMES’s days, and the illustrious Englishmen who brought in King WILLIAM—had been told that the day should ever arrive, when the Professors of Protestant Doctrines, and the lovers of Civil Liberty would, in defiance of all history, and in spite of the costly sacrifice for Divine Truth which had been made in this country; take up the opinion that we might safely open the Senate House, the Citadel, and the Council Chamber, to that Intolerant and Antichristian Power which had already cost England her best blood and treasure; what would they have thought of such a prediction? One thing at least they must have felt—that if in the righteous purpose of GOD, the fearful conflict out of which they had themselves come victorious, were intended at some future period to be fought over again, to the discomfiture of our Protestant Church, no means would be more likely to accomplish such an end, than that the soundest and purest part of that Church should be so far besotted and infatuated, as to forget or despise the solemn warning thus exhibited in their own history; and begin to dream that this Protestant Church and State, could by any possibility continue great and free, under concessions like these. May we not reasonably expect, that with no better or higher sense of the value of Protestant Truth among our people, and with “the holy seed chief in this trespass,” we are likely to provoke GOD to remove the golden candlestick out of his place, and no longer to leave the ark of his testimony in the keeping of Levites, who are thus ignorant of their, and our, privileges, and of the duties they respectively entail? It was well said by a venerable Clerical friend of your’s, Mr. SCOTT, “when a man has not got a good reason for doing a thing, he has a very good reason for letting it alone.” Now whatever reasons certain Politicians may have for what they call *emancipating the Catholics*, or, in other words, for letting out the lions and tigers upon us, I apprehend, that if Evangelical Professors cannot show a

good Scriptural reason for this experiment, they have, of all others, the best reason for letting it alone.

It certainly was a disheartening and depressing circumstance for those friends of our own Church, who had hoped and expected better things from certain of its Clergy and Laity, to find not a few of them bitten by the general mania of liberality, in reference to these undefined and indefinable Claims; and the exclamation of JOSHUA, naturally presented itself to our minds, "O LORD, what shall I say, when Israel turneth their backs before their enemies!" Let a distinguished Female of modern times, "whose praise is in all the Churches," be heard on this deeply interesting subject, I mean MRS. HANNAH MOORE,—in a letter to a Member of the present Parliament, on the subject of the Catholic Claims; she thus expresses herself,—“I disagree radically, totally, and unalterably, on that awful question, with our excellent friend Mr. ——. I see in its adoption, all the evils you have pointed out, and which my mind has long painfully foreboded. *I trust I shall not live to see such a calamity brought upon my Country, and my Religion.*”

I shall review in my next, some of the reasons adduced by Evangelical men, for conceding the Claims of the Church of Rome,

And am, Dear Sir,

Your most obedient faithful Servant,

AMICUS PROTESTANS.

LETTER XII.

DEAR SIR,

I now examine some reasons assigned by certain of the Evangelical Clergy, in favour of the Roman Catholic Claims. First:—It is contended, that the Clergy and Laity of Rome have ever been, and continue to be, *two distinct bodies*; and therefore, that proving the POPE and the Romish Clergy to remain as bigotted, persecuting, and intolerant as

ever, proves nothing against making the Romish LAITY eligible to act as Peers, Commoners, Privy Counsellors, Prime Ministers, Colonial Governors, Judges, Sheriffs, and Magistrates, in a Protestant Empire, unless it can also be proved, that Roman Catholic Laymen have been invariably in the interests of their Priesthood, and are still actuated by the same bad spirit; and further, that even admitting the Laity to be too much like their Priests, the only effectual way to make new men of them, is to enable them to share with Protestants, in Civil, Judicial, Legislative, and Executive Power, in order that their prejudices may be extinguished—their union with the Clergy effectually dissolved—and the Clergy themselves, with the POPE at their head, for ever consigned by the magnanimous concessions of Protestant liberality, to the utter contempt and insignificance into which his Holiness and his Clergy cannot fail in that case speedily to sink. As there is something imposing in this argument, I shall consider it somewhat in detail; and I must, in the first place, deny, that in their relation to PROTESTANTS, the Clergy and Laity of Rome have ever been, or can now be considered, in any respect, as distinct bodies. As far as WE are concerned, (however distinct may be their mutual relation to each other) they are one and indivisible—having a common head, a common union, and a common object. In this respect, they resemble a certain alliance, of which we read in Scripture, where we find, that when the Saviour was to be delivered up —“the same day PILATE and HEROD were made friends together; for before they were at enmity between themselves.” In proof that the Clergy and Laity have common interests, I refer to an overwhelming mass of testimony, derived from the History of our own country, and of the whole Christian world; and more especially to Dean MILNER’s invaluable History of the Church of CHRIST; but one evidence of the devotedness of the Romish LAITY to their own Church and Cause, lies upon the very surface of British History. The State Trials prove, that when that celebrated Catholic LAYMAN, GUY FAWKES, was examined before the Privy Council,

he said he was “moved *only for Religion and Conscience sake*, for that the KING was not his lawful Sovereign, in respect he was a HERETIC,” and Sir EVERARD DIGBY, his Instigator—another Catholic LAYMAN, declared, that HIS “first motive was not ambition, nor discontent, but *the cause of Religion*, for which alone, seeing it lay at the stake, he resolved to neglect his estate, his life, his name, his memory, his posterity. and all wordly felicity, whatever.” (See State Trials, Vol. II. p. 187.) The Histories of the two Irish Rebellions of 1642 and 1798, by Sir JOHN TEMPLE, and Sir RICHARD MUSGRAVE, plainly connect the Romish Laity with their Clergy, in fomenting and conducting those deplorable events; I only add, in reference to more pacific movements, the notorious fact, that the Jesuits, who are not necessarily Priests, but LAYMEN also, have been from their origin, the most powerful and active agents of the Church of Rome against the whole Protestant system; and indeed, the mixed Constitution of this regular and secular Order, was intended for the very purpose of its gaining them a more ready introduction into general Society, especially in reference to the education and instruction of the rising generation of Roman Catholic, and (where practicable of) PROTESTANT Laymen. I apprehend then, that it a great error to contend, that the Romish Clergy and Laity have distinct interests or feelings in reference to the Protestant Church and Cause; the fact being, that no conscientious Romanist, who really understands his own creed, and the obligations it imposes—no matter whether he be in, or out of, Priest’s orders, can heartily love, or honestly tolerate, a Protestant Church, when it stands in competition with HIS OWN CHURCH, which cannot be denied to have once enjoyed those very honours and emoluments, which he firmly believes do still of right belong to it. When, therefore, it is said, “we are legislating not for the Clergy but for the Laity,” I answer, that though this new mode of Legislation may sound well, it will not work well, because, it is both morally, and physically impossible, to give power to Romish Laymen, without doing the same for the Romish

Clergy; nor can the interests of the two be ever disjoined, so far as they mutually stand opposed to the interests of Protestantism. To imagine, therefore, for a moment, that giving to the Laity of the Church of Rome the means of extensively aiding their own Church, will all at once render them so unlike themselves, and so unworthy of their profession, that they shall magnanimously resolve to do nothing for their own Church, when, for the first time in their lives, they will have obtained the power of aiding it, will be to set up an hypothesis which is opposed to the whole current of ancient experience, and to treat all HISTORY as the stern-lights of a vessel, which, instead of throwing a light over the track which lies before us, shall only illuminate the path we have passed over. Before this can be expected of us, it is at least incumbent on those of our Evangelical Clergy and Laity, who modestly demand that we should close the volume of History in favour of those innovations, (nothing less than *revolutionary*), which are meditated in the whole frame of our Religious and Civil Polity—that they should produce some proofs, either that Romish Priests have renounced their foreign allegiance, and their persecuting spirit, or, at all events, that Romish Laymen have, in some official and public manner, dissolved their spiritual and political connection with their own Clergy, and abandoned those hostile feelings towards ourselves, by which they have invariably been actuated.*

Unfortunately for such reasoners, the proofs lie all the other way: and would they but open their eyes to the behaviour of modern LAYMEN of the Romish Church (more especially in Ireland), they would find that the Decrees of the Council of Trent, are not considered obligatory alone on

* Mr. PLOWDEN, the Roman Catholic Layman, in his "Case Stated," after asserting the supreme authority of the Pope, and the infallibility of General Councils, says, (p. 17), "If any one pretends to insinuate that modern Roman Catholics differ in one iota from their predecessors, he is either deceived himself, or he wishes to deceive others. *Semper eadem* is not more emphatically descriptive of our Religion, than of our Jurisprudence."

the Clergy, (as it was never meant they should be), but that they are equally binding on the LAITY ; and let any Christian man, who really knows what the Decrees of that Council are, lay his hand upon his heart, and ask himself, whether it is possible for a human being, who receives those Decrees, with the annexed Anathemas, on Canonical Authority, to abstain from doing what in him lies, to lay the Protestant Church in the dust, and to erect his own upon her ruins. Not even the Sacerdotal Oath, upon which many Protestant Writers has so unanswerably commented, can more certainly oblige the Priest in this matter, than will the conscience of every honest Layman, who knows any thing of his own Religion and its requirements. I shall consider some other reasons in my next,

And am, Dear Sir,

Your most obedient, faithful Servant,

AMICUS PROTESTANS.

LETTER XIII.

DEAR SIR,

I pursue my examination of some of the reasons assigned by the Evangelical Clergy and Laity, in favour of the Roman Catholic Claims.

2.—They contend, that *further concession will dry up the sources of complaint and disaffection, so that in this way, Christian Union and Peace will be brought about*; but this hope is completely opposed to all our preceding experience, for no concession has, as yet, produced any other effect, than to whet the appetite for more, and to excite increased irritation on every fresh resolution of Protestants to take a position, and to leave off giving. The preamble of the late Relief Bill, recites all the former grants, as themselves affording the strong and sufficient argument for yielding those which remain. Unless, therefore, every thing is meant to be eventually given up, including the National Throne,

the Episcopal Bench, and the Ecclesiastical Revenues (a sacrifice for peace, which, I suppose, will find few advocates among Protestants), it appears vain to expect, that the rising and rampant spirit of demand, "which grows by what it feeds on," will be laid by further concession, and, therefore, the sooner a stand is made, the better. That concession is the parent of demand, is demonstrable from hence, that while the laws against Popery existed in Ireland, the Roman Catholics (though not loyal in sentiment), were passive and quiet, because political power was then so completely out of their reach, that they had no temptation to seize it. After Mr. MITFORD's Bill passed, in 1791, the Irish Catholics petitioned the Irish Parliament for the Elective Franchise; which Petition was rejected by a majority of 208 to 23; and yet in 1793, Mr. BURKE succeeded, by the most fatal perversion of his eloquence, which he ever employed, in persuading the Parliament to go this length, and much further, which dangerous policy (so far from answering his brilliant predictions of conciliation), was followed, in 1798, by the Irish Rebellion, which was, to all intents and purposes, a RELIGIOUS REBELLION, fomented and conducted by Roman Catholics, in order to the exaltation of their own Church. Peace, like Charity, is doubtless a good thing in itself, but as there is a spurious Charity, so there is a false Peace. The Peace which is promised us from the proposed concessions, contains in it no principle of perpetuity, so that old Bishop HALL's Treatise, of "*No peace with Rome*," will perhaps be found as applicable to the present state of the Protestant Church, as when it first issued from his pen.

3.—It is further said by our Religious friends, that if (contrary to their expectation), any struggle for pre-eminence and power should hereafter arise on the part of Roman Catholics, the numerical majority being still on the side of Protestants, we shall be sure of resisting these efforts with effect; and further, that if any conflict should arise between Spiritual Religion, and Carnal Policy—between light and darkness—the friends of Divine Truth, in the present eq-

lightened æra, will have as little trouble in coming off conquerors. It seems to me, however, rather the part of wisdom to avoid hostility, when we may, than to provoke it for the mere purpose of exhibiting our prowess, where the event must needs be more or less uncertain, and where success does not follow as a necessary consequence from a numerical majority. We know where it is written, "So the House of AHAZIAH had no power to keep still the kingdom," and how can we answer for the result of our own worldly wisdom? It is one thing for the Church to be "militant," as in a greater or less degree she must be "here on earth;" but it is another thing for her to put on her armour, when she can shew no call or warrant for doing so, and then to boast herself, "as he that putteth it off." I know it was not unusual, in the primitive times, to covet Martyrdom, as a test of sincerity; but that man should be very sure of his own strength, who would provoke persecution in the present age of the Church; and he may at least be expected to feel something for his weaker brethren, even if he has no fears on his own account. I would here recommend all those of my Religious friends, who are unnecessarily venturing too near the crater either of Religious or Political combustion, to read the powerful and judicious Sermon which Mr. GEORGE CLAYTON, (the Dissenting Minister), lately addressed to the Dissenters in general, and to all those half-witted Professors of Religion, whether in or out of the Church, who were espousing the cause of the QUEEN, and confidently fancied that their Religion would have enabled them to stand fast in a season of general calamity and confusion; and while I am on this delicate subject, permit me, in the spirit of unfeigned affection, to suggest to yourself, whether you do not see in the line of policy which you lately adopted in reference to the restoration of the QUEEN'S name to the Liturgy, avowedly for no better reason, than because the general voice demanded it, sufficient ground for distrusting your own judgment on the Roman Catholic Question. That particular measure was then deemed by you, a necessary and indispensable sacrifice to

public opinion, and essential to the common happiness, precisely as you now regard the concession of the Roman Catholic Claims. The wisdom of our Councils however, saved our National Church from such a degradation, and the Nation is yet safe. Let the same wisdom resist the far more perilous experiment now recommended, and I augur, that we shall rejoice, as one man, in not having followed your present prescription, out of a three pair of stairs window.

We know the worst of continuing to stand on that vantage ground, where the mercy of God, and the wisdom of our ancestors have placed us; but we do not know the worst of descending into the valley of humiliation, and the slough of despond, whither the *ignes fatui* of a few brilliant speeches and fallacious promises would now invite us. It is true, that there is some salt in the mess of pottage for which we seem disposed to sell our birth-right, if we can consent to accept of ridicule for argument, and buffoonery for demonstration; but our Religious and Civil Liberty would surely be ill exchanged, even for the gay declamations of Mr. CANNING,

——— “ Laughing wild
“ Amid severest woe.”

And when once our inheritance shall be gone, and the delusive oratory which “made the worse appear the better reason,” shall have departed with it, there will be nothing left but the bitterness of vain repentance, and the anguish of irremediable despair.—It was not in vain that a great master of human life, and ancient oratory, said, “*Magister optimus est usus.*”

It is not, believe it, Sir, the silvery tones even of your persuasive eloquence, (never heard by me before the night of the 16th March last, but with unmixed satisfaction and delight) that can eventually reconcile the people of this Protestant and free Country, (and free, *because* Protestant) to the monstrous coalition which you would now recommend; and little as too many of them at present appear to understand either the nature of their own inevitable danger, or of your amiable delusion, the time is not far distant, when (if there be

any truth in History), they will awake to a lively sense of the extent of those privileges which they have despised, and the acuteness of that misery which they have deserved. I shall consider some further arguments for the concessions in my next,

And am, Dear Sir,

Very truly your's,

AMICUS PROTESTANS.

LETTER XIV.

DEAR SIR,

It is contended by some of your Clerical friends, that *the great object of Protestants in diffusing Education and Knowledge, particularly in Ireland, will be best promoted by conceding equal Political Rights to the Members of the Romish Church*. I believe, I am as hearty a friend to the education both of the English and Irish, as the warmest advocate of Education on either side of the Channel; but by what miracle (certainly not short of a Popish miracle) the proposed measure is to further the interests of PROTESTANT EDUCATION, I have yet to learn; and I can find no one who will undertake to inform me, except by the general assertion, that granting the concessions will cause every kind of evil to fly off at once from the great political alembic, like so much hydrogen, and that the residuum can only be pure Religion, universal Charity, and eternal Concord! I have already endeavoured to prove, that the dissolution of the connection between the Priesthood and the Laity, ("fond couple linked more close than wedded pair") is an event rather to be desired than expected, as the result of the intended concessions; but supposing this separation to be effected, will either the Priesthood or Laity of the Romish Church, admire or endure Protestant Education at all more than at present, or look more favourably upon the exertions making for this purpose? —nay, with more of power to hinder Protestants from educa-

ing Children, and from diffusing the Protestant Bible, and Protestant Tracts—is it not morally certain, that such power will be exerted, for the purpose of preventing the continuance of even the good which is at present achieving? Can any imaginable condition of things, render the Education of Children as PROTESTANTS, or the Instruction of Adults, as PROTESTANTS, at all more tolerable to Romish Bigotry, and Intolerance, (whether Clerical, or Secular) than they are at present; and may it not be fairly argued, when the Romish Religion shall come to be recognized and accredited,—shall be invested with power, and perhaps paid from the Public Purse,—that all attempts of Protestants to educate Roman Catholic Children, and perhaps to convert them, ought no longer to be tolerated? So far from any conceivable advantage accruing to the great object of Protestant Education, the probability is wholly against the Church of Rome (especially in Ireland) enduring the efforts which are now making, and which are already most offensive, and odious to her system of darkness, superstition, and vice. On the other hand, let but the present exertions of enlightened Protestants proceed for a few years more, in the ratio they have advanced for a few years past, more especially in Ireland, and the results of that system of Instruction, which is now so extensively carrying on—above all, through the medium of the Hibernian Society, and the Sunday Schools, will be manifest to all. It will then be seen, that so much will have been brought about by these means, for the cause of Divine Truth,—the blessings of civilization,—and the knowledge of the Scriptures, that there was no need of resorting to the wild and visionary theories of Political adventurers, and Irish fortune-hunters, whose introduction to Political Power, instead of forwarding the work of Protestant Education, must, in the very nature of things, obstruct and prevent it, unless we are resolved to believe, that Romish Priests and Laymen (in opposition to *their own testimony*) can tolerate and facilitate a Protestant Education.—I argue then, that to grant the concessions, in the hope of the concert of Roman Catholics in our present glorious scheme, of Evangelizing and Educating Ireland, is to venture

on a fatal compromise with Error, under which we cannot reasonably expect the blessing of GOD, if it be a part of His Word, that we are not to "do evil that good may come."

The Education and Evangelizing of Ireland, are the legitimate weapons of pure Christian Charity, in the use of which, the Professors of Religion, may conscientiously look for the Divine favour and protection. The Political experiment of giving credit to Idolatry, currency to false Doctrine, and power to Persecution, however it may help a few ambitious Demagogues, to rise on the common ruin of both countries, is a rash and desperate adventure, which has neither precedent, nor prescription to recommend it; which sets at defiance the wisdom of ages; subjects to imminent peril those costly and precious Institutions, which have descended to us as the best inheritance of antiquity; cannot fail to hazard the extinction of the Religious and Moral light, which is at present dawning upon Ireland; and betrays such a perverse and crooked course of policy, as might least and last have been expected from those, who themselves profess to value the blessings of a Reformed Church, a Protestant Constitution, and a free Government. I shall pursue this subject in my next,

And am, Dear Sir,

Your most faithful Servant,

AMICUS PROTESTANS,

LETTER XV,

DEAR SIR,

The notice which I have taken in my last, of what appears to me (I wish not to say it offensively), the FOLLY of Protestants, and of Protestant Ministers too—nay, of Evangelical Ministers also, in expecting, that the concession of the Romish Claims, will forward and facilitate Protestant Education, and Protestant Instruction, either in England or Ireland, has naturally reminded me of the kindred folly of many among us, who call themselves Protestants, in reference to the ROMISH CHAPELS AND SCHOOLS, which are now springing up in

every quarter of this (as yet) Protestant country—a species of infatuation, which resembles the inconsistency of a man who, while he professedly admits, that a neighbouring conflagration is to be deprecated, and ought to be kept from extending to his own house, is yet observed, at the same time, to be feeding it with combustibles. This modern liberality of sentiment, appears to me, an offering of “a strange fire,” which the GOD of Truth and Holiness cannot (consistently with his own revelation of his will) either approve or reward, as being neither taken from his altar, employed in his service, or tending to his honour. It is, however, from indications like these, that we have been told, even by our Evangelical friends, that “the present state of the Protestant mind, affords an argument for conceding the Romish Claims.” I am sure, Sir, that with all possible respect for the Charity of Christianity; you will readily acknowledge, that there is also the Charity of Indifference, which is commonly another name for the Charity of Ignorance: but which is any thing else than the Charity of the Gospel. The great Dr. JOHNSON, in remarking on the spurious pretensions of FREDERIC the GREAT, to Charity, observes, “It is the great taint of his character, that he has given reason to doubt, whether his Toleration is the effect of Charity, or Indifference; whether he means to support good men of every Religion, or considers all Religions as equally good.”

The following is my comment, upon this text of our great Lexicographer and Moralist:—On opening the new Romish Chapel, in Moorfields, not only was a large number of PROTESTANTS present at the celebration of Mass,* but they contributed very generally, and largely, towards the expences of that Chapel, when several hundred pounds were collected. We have here, the gross inconsistency of modern Protestants,

* “If any person,” (says the great Lord BACON) “do scandalize the Liturgy, he makes a rent in the garment; but, much more, such as are not only differing, but, in a sort, opposite unto it, by using a superstitious and corrupted form of Divine Service—I mean such as say or HEAR MASS.”—*Judicial Charge on the Commission for the Verge.*

building Romish Chapels, and thus contributing to the support of a worship, which their ancestors deemed Idolatrous and Unscriptural, and "resisted unto blood." If it be said, that, in this enlightened age, we ought not to hold such illiberal ideas, I answer, that unless the Romish Religion can be proved to be a totally different thing from what it once was, the sound arguments of our greatest English Divines, and the protests of "the noble Army of Martyrs," are of equal force now as formerly, and, consequently, if they were not mistaken, those who can publicly pay for the support and extension of Popery, or publicly argue, and write, so as to produce the same effect, have degenerated from the National Faith; for certain it is, that our Protestant ancestors, and these, their modern descendants, cannot both be in the right.

Of a piece with this anomaly, is the contribution of money and influence, which it has become the fashion for other Protestants to afford to the ROMISH SCHOOLS. From the official account of the Associated Catholic Charities, which lately appeared in the different Papers, we find, that no fewer than 2460 Children, were then educating in London, with a large proportion of Protestant money; which number has very greatly increased since. As far as Education alone goes, there is, doubtless, something very captivating in the sound; and all who look no farther, are likely to be attracted and seduced; but, what is the plain English of the whole matter? Why, that many, if not most, of these poor Children, are Educating as *Roman Catholics*—are regularly carried to Mass—and are taught, that the well-meaning gentry, who are paying for their Education, are all esteemed Heretics by the Mother Church, and, as such, are out of the pale of Salvation.* Now, Sir, again I ask, upon what principle are we so absurdly liberal, as to train up Children in a Religion, diametrically opposed to the National Faith, and the Professors of which Religion, still

* "HERETICS they call us, by the same right that they call themselves CATHOLICS, both being wrong."—Preface of Translators of the English Bible.

persist in maintaining the Infallibility of the Romish Church, and the Spiritual Supremacy of the Roman Pontiff in this Nation? I take, in this case, as in the other, a plain distinction between the *toleration* of error, and the *support* of it. Let Romish Schools be tolerated by all means, as well as Romish Chapels; but let not Protestants encourage, and support, either the one or the other, unless they are prepared to renounce the Faith they profess. If Popery be the Religion of the Scriptures, the sooner we join its ranks the better; but, if otherwise, let us be consistent with our Profession. In regard to such manifest inconsistencies, the Roman Catholics are very honestly speaking out, for they are employing these concessions of some Protestants, as arguments, to prove the Bigotry and Illiberality of others, who (like myself) are conscientiously unable to support these Chapels and Schools. The official account of a late grand Dinner of the Catholic Schools, declares, that all Protestant Non-Subscribers, are "governed solely by Prejudices," and informs us, that Education will remove "the Despotism of Prejudice." Dr. POYNTER, the Vicar Apostolic, declared in his speech, that "the attention of the Masters, was particularly directed towards giving the Children *proper Religious Instruction*," which can only mean, Instruction in the Principles and Practices of the Romish Religion; and a conspicuous friend of these Schools, congratulated the Meeting, on "the progress of Religious Liberty," which was kindly interpreted by a Noble Lord then present, to mean "the Concession of the Catholic Claims" by a British Parliament. Since this modern Love Feast, there has been another of the same description, at which an enormous collection was made, chiefly from PROTESTANTS, for defraying the expense of building another Romish School, in Stamford Street, Blackfriars!

These facts lead me to observe, that when any argument for the Claims is drawn from "*the present state of the Protestant mind*," it becomes worthy of consideration, whether that state of mind, is really the result of such deep and mature reflection upon the conflicting Doctrines of both Creeds, and the con-

tending Claims of both Parties, as may entitle us to believe, that a sound judgment is likely to be exercised upon the question; or whether "the present state of the Protestant mind," is not rather the result of a deplorable Ignorance and Indifference, which leads such multitudes among us, to feel no Holy Jealousy for the Honour of GOD, as opposed to the pretensions of Idols, and no anxious concern, at the increase of the Romish Religion among us—nay, even permits them, without compunction, to lend a helping hand, in order to set up this Dagon again in the Temple, although it has so often fallen prostrate, dismembered, and defaced, before the Ark of the Living GOD. Might it not more reasonably have been expected, that when enlightened Protestants had contemplated the probable consequences, of only an indirect encouragement of Idolatry and Vice, they would have felt something of his indignation, whose "spirit was stirred within him," when he beheld the public triumph of those kindred evils, in the polished, but profligate, Capital of Athens?

I am, Dear Sir,

Your most obedient and faithful Servant,

AMICUS PROTESTANS.

LETTER XVI.

DEAR SIR,

It is further contended, by some of our Evangelical friends, that the concession of the Romish Claims, is likely to stir up the Protestant Hierarchy, and Clergy, both of England and Ireland, to more vigorous exertions in the cause of Divine Truth, in promoting the interests of vital Religion in their Dioceses and Cures; in patronizing such Societies and Individuals, as are known to forward those important objects, and in carrying the benefits of Education to a much larger extent than has yet been attained. It is further contended, that with such a powerful stimulant, as a knowledge that the great body of the Romish Clergy, is likely to step into their

places (perhaps without notice to quit), the Clergy of the Establishment, on both sides of the water, will be roused, from whatever of apathy and remissness may be supposed to have gained ground upon them, in the lapse of time, owing to the ordinary operation of outward repose and security; and that in this way, a beneficial result cannot fail to arise, from the spirit of competition which is likely to be excited, by the nearer contact and collision of the two Churches.

To the United Church of England and Ireland, will undoubtedly apply that solemn question, "Are there not with you—even with YOU—sins against the LORD your GOD?" Dr. CHALMERS, in observing on Church Patronage, in his "Christian and Civic Economy of great Towns," has ably, and unanswerably, pointed out one great source of the defects of our National Church; and I would hope, that the powerful, yet temperate warnings of this great and good man, will not be without their use. The uncharitable and unkind spirit, evinced by more than one of our highest Dignitaries, in reference to those invaluable and justly popular Institutions, the Bible Society, and Church Missionary Society, is not to be defended; nor can I for one, attempt to justify, the extraordinary and novel procedure, of a modern Prelate having (in addition to the Thirty-nine Articles), adopted no fewer than Eighty-seven Questions, involving the most abstruse, and controverted, points in Theology and Metaphysics, to which all Candidates for Holy Orders in his Diocese, are required to give distinct answers in writing, under their hand, and who equally go without Ordination, if they decline to answer; or if they do not, in answering, abide this particular test of Orthodoxy. Of these, and other anomalies, I shall say,

—"*Pudet hæc opprobra nobis
Et dici potuisse, et non potuisse refelli.*"

After every admission, however, of existing evil, and under no ordinary sense of its pressure, I can still apply to our venerable and admirable Establishment, the language of the

Poet, when he said of his native land, "England, with all thy faults, I love thee still!" I would neither deliver over my Church, nor my Country, to a Revolution, because, either the one or the other, may stand in need of Reform; nor am I prepared to make any curative experiments, upon the Constitution of the Church of England, through the medium and instrumentality of her ancient and sworn enemy, the Church of Rome—"Non tali auxilio tempus eget." I am not sure, that in subjecting her to the process of improvement by such an agency, we may not find the wheat plucked up with the tares; nor is it quite clear to me, that the wisest way to bring an inactive, or even revolting, army to its senses, would be to let the enemy at once into the camp, or to throw open the doors of the citadel. I readily admit, that if it should seem fit to Infinite Wisdom, to scourge and chastise the Church of England, even by means of the corrupt and apostate Church of Rome, it will be only in righteous judgment; because "He doth all things well," and knows how to bring good out of evil; and, in that case, it will be the manifest duty of the pious and wise, in our own Church, to submit in silence, to such a painful dispensation, with the patience and humility befitting those who are called to suffer for their transgressions, in the full confidence, that the true Church of CHRIST, wherever it may be, will come pure out of every trial, and will eventually stand firm, being founded on a Rock, against which, "the Gates of Hell shall not prevail;" but, notwithstanding all this, I should not feel justified, in voluntarily putting to hazard, the existence of the best blessings we possess, merely on account of some contingent advantages which may possibly arise. I cannot contemplate, with the coolness and composure of some of my Religious friends, the possible, nay probable, miseries to which our own Church and Country must be exposed, by giving any portion of power to the intolerant and sanguinary Church of Rome; nor can I ever think of being present, at what may prove to be an execution, without at least, averting my eyes from the scene, more especially, as I, or my Children after

me, may perchance, be something more than mere spectators. I think that our Evangelical friends, will at least do well to remember, that even the Prophets themselves, although the appointed Ministers of the Divine wrath, executed their commission with a Holy reluctance, which, while it did not deter them from duty, endeared them to the affections, even of the sufferers themselves. They neither invited nor outstepped their commission, much less did they anticipate its execution with any feelings of complacency, or joy—"As for me, I have not desired the woeful day, thou knowest."—"Woe unto you that desire the day of the Lord—to what end is it for you? Shall not the day of the Lord be darkness, and not light—even very dark, and no brightness in it?" It is one thing to acquiesce, if needs be, in the trials which may overtake us and ours, but it is another thing to bring those calamities upon ourselves, by our contempt of Instruction, our scepticism of History, our love of change, or even our hope of amelioration. Who, among the wisest friends of Catholic Emancipation ("falsely so called"), or who amongst the most acute and accurate observers of the faults and follies of our own Church, will undertake to tell us, where innovation is to stop—when the advocates and friends of Popery will be satisfied—and what will be the entire and ultimate cost of our own sacrifices? How is it clear, that Education will flourish, under the auspices of the Romish Episcopacy, the Vicars Apostolic, and the English and Irish Jesuits, more than it does at present, and where is our indemnity, if it should happen to prosper less? The probabilities are all against us—"Shall horses run upon the rock?—will one plough there with oxen?" Admitting that one or more of our own Prelates (in spite of their own large and tolerant system) have somewhat narrow souls, yet who can certify us, that "the little finger" of a Popish Bishop (to allude to the case of REHOBOAM), may not be "thicker than the loins of the whole Protestant Hierarchy?" Who does not see, that if the one may "chastise us with whips," the other "will chastise us with scorpions?" Did SHAKSPEARE advise in

vain, that it was "better to bear the ills we have, than fly to others that we know not of?" Who will guarantee us, that the amicable emulation to which our Evangelical friends invite the two Churches, will ever produce any other advantage, than in their own sanguine imaginations, or should they disavow such a co-operation, and contend, that they only contemplate the Protestant Church as *taking the lead* in the work of Education and Instruction, when the new Relief Bill shall have separated the Romish Clergy from the Laity; how do they know, that any such *beau projet* as this will ever be realized, or that their elder sister, the Church of Rome, will so quietly and tamely yield them the primacy in this good work, and not rather contend, in no friendly spirit, for her superior right to a monopoly in the work of Educating and Instructing the population after her own fashion? At all events, let no flattering prospect of remedying any present evils in our own Church, by an appeal to the Church of Rome, blind our eyes to the inevitable danger of calling her in, either as an arbitrator or an ally; an act of Political suicide, which has no better precedent to plead, than the unwise and unsafe appeal of two native combatants to a foreign enemy, or the reference of the poultry-yard to the fox, for the purpose of composing mutual differences. Such hopeless appeal as this, can only prove what Mr. BURKE once happily called another of the same nature,—“an arrangement for general confusion.” That individuals of our own Church (even in the highest place) may be doctrinally, or practically, in error, is inseparable, from the infirmity of our common nature, but their errors in doctrine, are all their own, for the standard, from which they may have departed, and to which they may always return, is pure and scriptural, and is in the hands of the meanest and poorest among us, so that their mistakes are capable of prompt detection, and of immediate remedy. That the same individuals may become intolerant in practice, is as readily admitted, but it is equally true, that the Protestant Church has not required this at their hands—that she abhors and disclaims intolerance, and that

the nature of our free Constitution, and the influence of public opinion, afford the means of counteracting and controuling these partial aberrations, from the spirit and genius of our National Establishment, without having recourse to unlawful, and unhallowed, remedies for the evil. Our Church does not compel her Priesthood, by Oath, to an interminable war with Christians of another Communion, much less with those of her own; nor does she consecrate and sanctify unscriptural abominations and errors, by setting up Human Tradition as of equal sanction with Holy Writ; by deferring to the glosses of fallible men, as the interpreters of infallible truth; or by implicitly submitting, either in matters of faith or practice, to the authority of Ungodly Popes, and the dogmas of Secular Councils.

I apprehend then, that even if the Church of England can be shewn to be neither perfect, nor faultless, (and SHE lays no claim, nor does any one of her defenders, to perfection or infallibility) we shall not, on that account, be justified in delivering her over, bound hand and foot, to the uncircumcised Church of Antichristian and Apostate Rome, in order to her purification and recovery. Such conduct as this, will only resemble the intemperate resolution, which was once hastily adopted in a crisis of danger,—“ I shall one day perish by the hand of Saul—there is nothing better for me, than that I should speedily escape into the land of the Philistines.” To throw ourselves into the arms of the Papists, will be indeed, to go over to the Philistines, who have only a radical way of curing our defective vision, and that is, by adopting the process which they observed towards SAMPSON—namely, by *putting out our eyes*.

I am, Dear Sir,

Your most obedient and faithful Servant,

AMICUS PROTESTANS.

LETTER XVII.

DEAR SIR,

In closing my remarks on those of the Evangelical Clergy, who are known to think with yourself on the Roman Catholic Claims, I wish to observe, that it is only with great reluctance and pain, I have referred to such valued friends at all, and that I am happy to acknowledge, that there are *some* of that body, who are strongly opposed to those Claims; and who, next to the paramount obligation of not wilfully injuring the Church of England, and the Constitution, feel it an imperative duty, not to subject them even to the *hazard* of injury. To those, however, who may silently feel conscious, that they have fallen within the scope of these observations, I would suggest a few reasons, why I think they should not cast those observations aside, without honouring them at least, with a little sober reflection. 1. If I know any thing of them, or if they know any thing of the Decrees of the Council of Trent, they will not venture to deny, that the Church of Rome is an IDOLATROUS CHURCH. The better educated Roman Catholic, may get over this charge of the Authors of our Homilies, as the wiser Heathens get over the same charge when applied to their own Mythology; viz., that the use of Visible Representations in Divine Worship, and Prayers to any Created Beings, (the Gods of the Heathens, and the Saints of the Romanists), do not necessarily involve the worship, either of Earthly or Heavenly Objects; but I know, that our Religious friends, will not admit the validity of such a plea, and I therefore put it to them, whether they can persist in favouring concessions, which begin, by giving up the charge of Idolatry, as applying to the Church of Rome; and must end in setting up, or at least, in giving credit, and currency, to a Worship of this Unscriptural character. If those Kings, Prophets, and Priests of Israel, who, either directly or indirectly, abetted Idolatry, or who did not do their utmost to prevent it rearing its head, were not held guiltless before GOD, although they might not,

themselves, have bowed before Idols, I ask such of our Religious friends, as do not mean to renounce the Homilies of our own Church, with what consistency they can yield any portion of Political Power, to the Priests of Baal, or suffer the Idol-Worship of the Church of Rome, (as Dr. GALE, has undeniably proved it to be, and as they will not deny that it is), to receive favour and countenance from them, for I affirm, without the hazard of refutation, that any additional encouragement, given to the Romish Idolatry, must, inevitably, afford countenance and sanction to it, and promote its further growth and extension in the land.

The same reasoning applies, with equal force, to the general Apostacy of the Anti-Christian Church of Rome, in reference to the many False and Corrupt Doctrines, which she holds to this hour, with all the tenacity of an Infallible and Immutable Guide, as she blasphemously assumes herself to be. It is in vain, that the Professors of Protestant Truth, contend, that they may safely concede the Roman Catholic Claims, so long as they are only ready to admit, (*totidem verbis*) the Doctrinal Corruptions of the Church of Rome. The admission of those corruptions, or even the Preaching and Writing against them, will not entitle those persons to the character of PROTESTANTS, in the full, ancient, and legitimate, acceptation of that term, who do not protest as much against holding out the Boon of Political Power, and the Rewards of Political Honour, to the Members of a False Church, as against the Erroneous Tenets professed by those persons—because, (without referring at this moment, to the political danger, of such a participation of Power and Honour) it is not conceivable upon any principles of analogy, how those inducements, to which I have referred, can be proposed to Roman Catholics, without increasing the numbers, multiplying the friends, and enlarging the resources, of an Unscriptural Creed. This consideration is, of course, as irrespective of any merely Political danger, as the argument, of which it forms a part, will be unintelligible to the mere Politician. It is addressed only to those, who, to use the

expressive language of Scripture, "can discern between their right hand, and their left hand," in matters of Religion, and with such, I leave it. "I speak as to wise men—judge ye what I say," I shall pursue this subject in my next,

And am, Dear Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

AMICUS PROTESTANS,

LETTER XVIII.

DEAR SIR,

Another consideration which should, I think, induce greater caution in those professors of Evangelical Religion, who favour the Romish Claims, is—lest their "good should be evil spoken of." THEY cannot but give offence, however closely they may confine themselves to their peculiar sphere of duty, because, "the offence of the Cross" has not ceased; but it is particularly desirable, that they should give no unnecessary cause of offence. Already is it imputed (though it cannot be proved) that they do not entertain the most friendly feelings towards the National Establishment; why then should they give any colour to such a scandal (for such it is,) by affording any ground for suspecting, that they, or any of them, are actuated by the policy of those avowed Infidels, and Heterodox Dissenters, who make no secret of *their* object, in espousing the claims of the Roman Catholics. Already has it been intimated in high place, that the Members of the British and Foreign Bible Society, owing to their heterogeneous association with men of all creeds, and of none, entertain such lax and latitudinarian notions, that the Church of England dare hardly reckon upon them as her genuine sons; although, Sir, it is the fixed and decided conviction, both of your heart and of mine, that she has not within her pale, more sincere and devoted friends, nor any who would (with the Great Apostle), more "gladly spend and be spent," in her service. Now since it is not true that there exists any,

the remotest, connection between the Bible Society, and a hostile feeling towards the Church and State ; and since, on the contrary, it can be plainly proved, that some of the best and heartiest friends of both, are to be found among the Members of that blessed Society, yet as one of its earliest Members, I would have every one of my Colleagues above suspicion ; and for this end, I wish not to see either her Clerical or Lay Members, offer the right hand of fellowship to Anti-christian Rome, so far as regards this crooked policy, of a secular alliance. Whatever we may do for her, spiritually, by giving her the Bible, and beseeching her to circulate it, and to suffer her people to read it, I feel deeply convinced, upon no superficial view of the subject, that we ought to do nothing to help her towards the acquisition of temporal power, whereby she may be enabled to display her own unchanged intolerance towards this Protestant Nation, and that truly Protestant Society, which is at once the glory and defence of the land. Let us, as one man, repel the insinuation that we are likely to leave the Church of England worse, in any sense, than we found it. As an unworthy, but affectionate Member of that Church, I do not hesitate to assert, because I know I can prove it, that the Bible Society has done much for our Venerable Establishment, and many of the wisest of her sons, have not been backward to acknowledge the obligation. It is only, however, as our weapons continue to be spiritual, that we can be useful either to the Church or the World ; and the Secretaries, the Committee, and the general body of the Bible Society, must, collectively and individually, take care how they give occasion to the reproach of inflicting a wound on the Church of England, least of all through the medium, and instrumentality, of the Anti-Biblical Church of Rome. The friends of the Bible Society, and of all those other great Religious and Moral Societies which are the peculiarity of our eventful times, and the protection of our beloved country, should look to it, that while they repose (in common with other Public Institutions) under the maternal wing of an equal toleration—they do not incur the remotest suspicion of a de-

sire to lift their heel against the National Establishment, more especially when the probable result of their ill-directed zeal for innovation and improvement, may have an effect which I know they are the last to intend—I mean the bringing of Popery into power, or even into vogue. Loving them as I do, I would have them not only to “abhor that which is evil,” but to “abstain from all appearance of evil.” They should not only dread an open defection from the great fundamental principles of Protestantism, but they should be absolutely above all taint of being suspected either of Religious or Political coquetry with that mother of abominations—the Harlot of the Apocalypse.—It is considerations, Sir, of this nature, which have invested YOUR patronage of the claims of Roman Catholics (and as I apprehend, by necessary consequence, of the RELIGION of Roman Catholics), with such a formidable character. I know you too well, not to believe that, if the bare probability of affording aid to the RELIGION of the Church of Rome, could be once brought home to your pure and upright mind, you would tremble at the prospect that lies before you; and I know that it is only because you do not see this danger, that you can persist in your present hazardous course of policy. Whether what I may have advanced, or may yet advance, in reference to this fearful experiment, may have the effect of awakening you to a sense of its danger, remains to be seen; but believing you, as I do, to be the subject of a deep and fatal delusion, and to be drawing with you a multitude who are content to let others think for them, I cannot conscientiously be silent. If, Sir, you be in error, it is impossible that you should err alone. When we behold a comet propelled in its eccentric career, we feel no surprise at its most distant aberrations, as knowing that it is only observing the law of its nature, and that while it rushes forward into the immensity of space, it travels on, unaccompanied by its own or other Satellites, and is independent of every connection but the Divine energy, which conducts it to its farthest limit, and will bring it back, in due time, to the primary fountain of light and heat—far different, however, would be our sensations, if one of those

regular orbs of our system, which we know to be performing its stated revolutions, within a prescribed period, round a common centre, should suddenly "start from its sphere," and, after having so long revolved in steady and unvarying progression, be at once unexpectedly diverted from its path. In this case, all speculation as to the *cause* of such a change would be absorbed in the inevitable conclusion that some *certain evil* must be the consequence of it—either to the Planet itself, to the Satellites which surround it, or to the Sytem with which it is connected. That any particular evil (of whatever extent) might indeed be more than compensated, in the end, by some general, though unknown, advantages to the universe at large, might be easily conceived, and humbly believed, by any man who admits the superintendence of an over-ruling Providence—but still, I apprehend his first and most natural impressions could only be of the painful character which I have described, and thus, "*parvis componere magna*," it is not without something of this kind of feeling that I and others have contemplated your unexpected and extraordinary deviation from the regular and steady track in which we had so long seen you move with admiration and delight. We know, indeed, that the true Church cannot be eventually injured either by her enemies or her FRIENDS, because she is founded upon a rock; but acquiescing, without hesitation, in this undoubted truth, we yet cannot contemplate without emotion, and still less can we invite and forward, the concussions and convulsions which may possibly yet lie between her present peaceful condition, and her final and glorious triumph.

I am, Dear Sir,

Your most obedient and faithful servant,

AMICUS PROTESTANS.

LETTER XIX.

DEAR SIR,

Among other advocates of the Roman Catholic Claims, we find, what I fear must be considered a majority, of THE DISSENTERS. Their object is, manifestly, to ride to the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, upon the shoulders of the Roman Catholics, and for this end, they are, (in the true spirit of Don Quixote) as steadily determined to make a bonfire of all History, as other moderns who are equally "wise in their own conceit." Regarding the records of past ages, with the same sovereign indifference as certain other of our friends, they seem determined, with them, to follow the counsel of Mrs. MALAPROP, when she said, "Let all our retrospection *be to the future.*" It is by no means clear to me, that if the Dissenters should succeed, in helping the Roman Catholics to the repeal of *their* disabling Statutes, they would be one whit nearer to the repeal of their own ; for every one must know, that there are multitudes, in the seats of Legislation and Government, who would, to-morrow, concede to the Church of Rome, what they will never concede to the Dissenters ; and indeed, the low amount of their influence in either House of Parliament, is much too palpable to be denied, even by an ordinary observer. It is, no doubt, under a different estimate of their own strength, that the Dissenters, as a body, are forwarding the Claims of the Roman Catholics, with a full conviction, that, in the moment that those Claims shall be granted, it will be impossible to refuse their own, and it was, I suppose, in this belief, that a Meeting of the Dissenting Ministers, very lately took place at Dr. WILLIAMS'S Library, for the purpose of Petitioning the House of Lords, FOR THE CLAIMS, on which occasion, however, (as in a case which had happened not long before, at the same place), the good sense of a few individuals, prevailed to defeat this ill-advised project, and the Meeting adjourned *re infectâ*. It is easy to understand, how a heterodox Dis-

sender; whose principles, almost necessarily lead him; to disturb or overthrow the existing order of things in Church and State, should be glad to avail himself of any Political pretext, for the accomplishment of his object; but that Dissenters, of whose Orthodoxy on all the great fundamentals of Religion, no possible doubt can exist, should lend themselves, to the Roman Catholics, is not so intelligible, and appears but too much to establish the observation of Mr. SOUTHEY, in his Life of WESLEY.—“In every Sect, except the Methodists, there is an inherent spirit of hostility to the Church of England, too often, and too naturally, connected with diseased Political Opinions.”

I apprehend, that in the case of the really pious and honest Dissenter, who espouses the Roman Catholic Claims, as in the kindred case of Religious and Moral Members of the Establishment, who are under the same hallucination, the evil is, that no adequate reference is made, to the spiritual abominations of Popery, and the danger of their extension; under an altered regimen—nor to the hazard which must accrue to Civil Liberty, in favouring a system, whose very life and soul is arbitrary power. The old Dissenters, I mean, such men as BUNYAN, BAXTER, OWEN, WATTS, DODBRIDGE, CALAMY, and HENRY, had an overwhelming sense of the perfectly unscriptural, and unsound character, of the Romish Superstition, regarding it as a strong delusion from the Father of Lies, and condescending to no compromise of any kind, with so much Idolatry and Error. This opinion of Popery, as a Religion, formed the basis of all their reasonings respecting it, as affecting any system of Human Government, with which it might have, or claim, connection; when, in addition to its Darkness and Delusion; as a question of Theology and Ethics, they viewed the Intolerance of its Political Character, and considered the bitter and bloody Persecutions, by which it had sought to establish its empire over man, and the utter impossibility of Civil Freedom flourishing, or even existing, under its baleful and poisonous shade, they felt no

hesitation in opposing such a system, as the foe of both God and Man, with every weapon, spiritual, and temporal, which was in their power. There has now intervened, between not their times and ours, a long interval of Ease and Security, not as many imagine, because, the dispositions of Roman Catholics are altered, as I think I have sufficiently shewn, but because, Protestants have been for so long a period, in the exclusive possession of Power. Reasoning, however, from the mere existence of this state of peace, but without referring to the single cause which has produced it, nay, even assigning it to a wrong cause, many modern Dissenters have imagined, that the Roman Catholics, may be now safely entrusted with Political Power; which is about as accurate a conclusion, as to argue, that the wild inhabitants of the Menagerie, may be suffered to go at large, because, their long repose during confinement, has sufficiently shewn them to have undergone a change of nature and dispositions. The fact is, we do not live sufficiently near the time of the fiery trial between the Church and the World, to understand the question at issue.—“Our Fathers,” says SHERLOCK, “who lived under the dread of Popery, and Arbitrary Power, are gone off the stage, and have carried with them the experience, which we their sons, stand in need of, to make us earnest to preserve the blessings of Liberty, and pure Religion, which they have bequeathed us.” And he adds, “O that I had words to represent to the present generation, the miseries which their fathers underwent; that I could describe their fears and anxieties; their restless nights, and uneasy days, when every morning threatened to usher in the last dawn of England’s Liberty.” I trust, this quotation may not be without its use. My present business, however, is with the DISSENTERS—and let any one of their body honestly consult, not only the “Morning Exercises at Cripplegate,” against Popery, but the “Lectures at Salters’ Hall,” against it—several of the Preachers of the former Lectures, having been Dissenters, and the whole of the Preachers of the latter, having been such, and then let him, if he can, any longer advocate the Roman Catholic

Claims. "I am too much of a Catholic," said PHILIP HENRY, "to be a Roman Catholic;" and surely, had such a question as now agitates this country, been proposed to that great and good man, he would have Dissented from modern Dissenters, and been too much of a Protestant, to wish to see Roman Catholics in the exercise of Legislative, Judicial, and Executive Power among Protestants. The authority of Dr. WATTS on this subject, is very striking, and I adduce it, as likely to be conclusive, both with Churchmen and Dissenters, who remember Dr. JOHNSON's testimony to the purity of his character, and the profundity of his erudition. "Few men," says he, "have left behind, such monuments of laborious piety. He has provided Instruction for all ages, from children who are lisping their first lessons, to the enlightened readers of MALEBRANCHE and LOCKE. He has left neither Spiritual, nor Corporeal Nature, unexamined; he has taught the Art of Reasoning, and the Science of the Stars." Now what says Dr. WATTS, of the Religious and Civil Bondage of Popery, and of the folly and ingratitude of those, who can forget their obligations to the Reformation, and the Revolution? After enumerating some of the superstitious additions of the Romish Church, and exposing her Corrupt Doctrines and Practices, he exclaims, "Blessed be the Name of our GOD, who has delivered our Nation from this bondage of Iniquity; from these foolish yokes and burdens of Superstition; these profane dishonours done to the Sacrifice and Atonement of JESUS our SAVIOUR. We are ready to look on Popery now, as lying far off, across the seas, as an evil thing at a great distance, and are not so much impressed with a grateful sense of our preservation from it. We are too soon forgetful of our narrow escape from this mischief, by the late Revolution, and the Protestant succession, by the arm of GOD, and by the best of Kings, WILLIAM, our Deliverer, and GEORGE, our Defender. Had it not been for these Providences of Heaven, and these Princes on Earth, our land might now have been filled with these Superstitions, and they might have been imposed on us, under the penalties of

imprisonment and poverty, torment and death. And how could we stand in the fiery trial? Awake, O my heart, and let my tongue awake into songs of praise and salvation, that I am not tempted, or compelled, to disgrace the blood of my Saviour, by having other Atonements for Sin imposed on my conscience. And in the midst of thy praises to God, O my soul, drop a tear of pity on thy brethren, who dwell in the midst of these temptations; and, in the language of Christian sympathy, lift up a prayer to Heaven for them, and say, How long, O Lord, how long?"—(WATTS'S Works, Vol. I. p. 411. edit. 1800.)

I might here remind our Dissenting friends, of several Poetical testimonies of Dr. WATTS, more especially, his Second Metre of the 115th Psalm, which he entitles, "Popish Idolatry Reproved," where he not only exposes the Idol Worship of Rome, (which many modern Churchmen and Dissenters say they are also ready to do), but plainly connects our Freedom, from such Spiritual Pollution, with our determined resistance to all the pretensions of the Romish Church to Political Power. (See also, his 124th Psalm, and his 92d Hymn, and more particularly, what he himself entitles, a "Hymn of Praise for three great Salvations; viz., from the Spanish Invasion—from the Gunpowder Plot—and from Popery and Slavery, by King WILLIAM." This last Hymn, occurs in that invaluable volume, too little known at present—his "Lyric Poems." I would also refer to his Answer to a Satire on King WILLIAM, in the same Volume, the conclusion of which, has something in it, but too applicable to our own days.

"Let great NASSAU, beneath a careful crown,
 "In mournful Majesty, look gently down,
 "Mingling soft pity with an awful frown;
 "He grieves to see, how long in vain he strove,
 "To make us blest, how long his labours prove,
 "To save th' ungrateful land he deigns to love."

I also refer to his inimitable "Epitaph on King WILLIAM," which is as remarkable for its exquisite poetry, as for its just

and exalted sentiments; and I ask the more Orthodox among the Modern Dissenters, to concede, if they can, the boon now modestly solicited by the Roman Catholics, which is nothing less, than the privilege of setting up their own Religion, in the room of the Religion of the Church of England, and of the Protestant Dissenters. A few words more to Dissenters, in my next.

I am, Sir,
Your most obedient Servant,

AMICUS PROTESTANS.

LETTER XX.

DEAR SIR,

I hope I may be permitted to observe, in reference to the Dissenters, without intending to convey any thing more offensive than the interests of truth appear to demand—that it forms no matter of astonishment when Socinians, Arians, or Unitarians, refuse to admit the impropriety or impolicy of conceding the Roman Catholic claims. In the case of Dissidents of these, and other kindred classes, who only appear to exist in an atmosphere of scepticism and error, theological and political, no common ground presents itself on which the Believers in the accredited canon of Scripture can reasonably hope to discuss, with any advantageous result, either this or any other great national question of Religion and Policy, with persons who deny the Divine authority, and paramount obligation, of the Holy Scriptures, either in all, or in part. It can afford no reasonable ground for surprise, that they who would overthrow the very foundation of our common Christianity, see no injury likely to arise to the cause of Truth from conceding political power to a Church which has erected upon that foundation a superstructure of pagan impiety, and absurdity. The Religious tenets of such Dissenters as these, come about as near to the pure and unadulterated gospel of JESUS CHRIST, as do those of the Council of Trent, and,

therefore, when we witness a junction between the forces of Antichrist, no matter whether appearing under the form of Popery or Socinianism, we are at no loss to understand either the nature of such an union, or the object proposed by it. The opposition of the Pharisees and Sadducees to our Divine Lord, affords us a sufficient clue out of this Labyrinth, and so far from expecting or desiring the co-operation of ~~such~~ Dissenters in opposing the Roman Catholic Claims, the friends of Divine Truth would be led by their concurrence to suspect, for once, the correctness of their own views, and the integrity of their own cause. Happily, however, there are very different characters among the Dissenters—men upon whom no taint, even of suspicion, can rest—men who are the legitimate descendants of the BAXTERS, OWENS, and HENRYS of a former age, and in every way worthy of the high descent which they can trace. Pointing to that illustrious and unblemished band, I, for one, would say, in reference to the Dissenting interest at least—

“In te spes omnis domûs inclinata recumbit.”

I beseech such men to answer to the high hopes which every really pious man, of every party, still reposes upon them. They cannot fail to see that this is not a mere struggle for place and power, but for much more—that it is a contest between light and darkness—that it is eminently a spiritual, and not a temporal, warfare—that the ancient foes of God and his truth are inviting and heartening each other to no ordinary conflict—and that an inquiry which was made in the early age of the ancient Church, is equally appropriate at present—“Who is on the Lord’s side.” Let Dissenters of this holy and elevated character, consent to merge their subordinate competitions with each other, and with ourselves, in the overwhelming interests of our common salvation; and no longer hesitate to take rank under the standard of MOSES, and the LAMB. To them, as to our Evangelical friends in the Church of England, I would say the Church of Rome owes YOU no favour, but has an ancient and irreconcilable quarrel with all, who have so long, under God, resisted her spiritual tyranny, and her political pretensions. The enmity of the Church of Rome is not to Churchmen

as such, nor to Dissenters as such, but to all, in either of those bodies, as they are the real servants of HIM whose kingdom was not of this world. Whatever favour the agents and allies of a system of darkness may be, at first, inclined to shew those simple hearted Dissenters who are now holding the ladder by which Vicars Apostolic, Romish Priests, and English Jesuits, may ascend to the object of their wishes, let such Dissenters be assured (I speak only to those of them who will understand), that the only privilege which will be conceded to them by the one immutable and infallible Church of antiquity, will be the privilege of being devoured last. Whoever is not with her, is, in her estimation, against her, and I know you too well not to know that you never can be with the Church of Rome. Be wise then in time. The points in dispute between yourselves and the Church of England are inconsiderable and unimportant; but the Church of Rome and yourselves are, and must be, at antipodes with each other. Your differences with the Church of England, are what BURNET calls "the heats concerning things indifferent," but your differences with the Church of Rome are upon great essentials, and are wholly incapable of adjustment, so long as you shall continue to retain any sense of the eternal distinction between forms, and realities—between shades, and substances—between right; and wrong. They who are wise among you, well know that the Church of England, "with all her imperfections on her head," is still the accredited rallying point, and the best defence, *even of Dissenters themselves*, against the exorbitant and unfounded pretensions of the Romish Church on the one hand, and the indefinite and shoreless latitudinarianism of no Church at all, on the other hand. Many among you are willing to admit that her Articles are consonant with Scripture, and are liberal enough to quote and use her Liturgy, while, upon all the main and distinguishing doctrines of our common faith, all of you, who are yet untainted with the blast and mildew of Polemical Infidelity, are, "of one heart and one mind" with the National Establishment. Rely upon it you have nothing to gain, and every thing

to lose, by the introduction of Popery either into the Church or the State. I am, however, warned to conclude, and shall close this series of Letters by a few remarks on the arguments publicly adduced by you, Sir, for the Claims.

I am, Dear Sir,

Your most obedient, faithful Servant,

AMICUS PROTESTANS.

LETTER XXI.

DEAR SIR,

Nothing is more easy than to fly a kite ; and however problematical may be the utility of such an employment, nothing, certainly, can be more safe, provided the sky be only calm and serene. I have, however, somewhere read of a great experimental Philosopher, who sent up a kite in a clouded state of atmosphere, the consequence of which was, that he was the first to fall a victim to the electric matter, of which his kite became the conductor, an event, which had never once entered into his calculations. In this case, however, the evil rested with the individual himself ; but we read in the records of Truth, of one ACHAN, of whom it is said, "This man perished not alone." As moral evils are never confined to the individual transgressor, so it is not in the nature of any great Political error, that it should affect only the Politician who may have fallen into it. If, Sir, you have not conferred a signal blessing upon your own Church, and your own Country, by your late public declaration for the Romish Claims, you will, if my preceding reasoning be worth any thing, have inflicted the most serious wound on the vitals of the Church of England, and entailed the severest calamity upon our Protestant Constitution, which they have ever yet received from one of their own Household. There is absolutely, no neutral, or negative course, for such a Senator as yourself. Every-day Statesmen, and ordinary Legislators, have it not in their power to do the good or evil, on this and other great ques-

tions of National Polity, either by their speeches or votes, which any one must have, who stands in your peculiar relation to the Church of CHRIST, and to the world at large. It is on this account, that I am still unwilling to suppose you so irretrievably lost to the interests of this Protestant Empire, as to believe, you can continue to advocate these undefined and indefinable, Claims, or despair of your even now retracing your steps. If you are right, then have the Martyrs died "as fools die"—then did LUTHER live and die under a grievous error, and WICKLIFFE preached and wrote in vain!

While your decided declaration, on the night of the 16th March, 1821, for laying our Protestant Constitution at the feet of the Church of Rome, produced affliction and dismay in many hearts, which had before beat only in unison with your own—the manner in which you then supported the Romish Claims, excited the utmost astonishment, among those who had always regarded you, as a RELIGIOUS Statesman. It was reasonably to be expected, that whenever, after the throes of three years, you should deliver your mature judgment on the Popish Claims, the *Religious* part of this momentous question, would, at least, have commanded the largest portion of your attention. So far from supposing it likely, that you would have absolutely omitted all notice of the bearings of this solemn question, upon the Religion of Holy Scripture, and upon the Professors of that Religion; those Members of our Reformed Church, who were opposed to the Claims, had a right to expect, that you should honestly have examined their arguments, and at least, have attempted, to allay their fears, as springing from, and connected with, their attachment to the Word of God, and their abhorrence of a Creed, which they believe to be in direct opposition to that Word; instead of this course of proceeding, you thought fit to treat this mixed and complicated question, almost exclusively, as one of Human Expediency, and condescended, in your discussion of it, to stoop so low, as to that Secular arena, which is invariably occupied by "the children of this world."

The silence observed by you, on the whole Theology of the Question, was not dealing with fairness, by the vast and awful interests which surround it, and are involved in its decision. The captivating prospect held out by you, of some possible *Political* advantages, from the concession of the Claims, was any thing else than an honest answer, to the Religious scruples and anxieties of the great mass of the Christian public—nor could such persons feel better satisfied, with such a scanty and imperfect view of this great Question, as merely affected its subordinate parts, than they could feel, that the second-hand, and second-rate witticisms, of another Orator, were calculated to exhibit so great a Question, in its fair and equitable proportions. It is impossible, that I can impute to you, the intentional *suppressio veri*, (which is only half-sister to the *suggestio falsi*), but that all notice, of the sacred interests of RELIGION, was excluded from your address, must be obvious, to any, and all, who have perused it. I have before observed, that if this serious Question is to be argued, merely on Human principles, and without reference to the Eternal distinction, subsisting between Popery and Protestantism; the main reason, for refusing these Claims, is at once conceded, and the strongest, and best defence, of the Protestant Church and Cause, abandoned. It is for relinquishing this strong position, that I think you have, as a Religious Legislator, incurred a deep responsibility, before GOD and your Country. Many Senators, on a late occasion, who make no particular Profession of Religion, did, notwithstanding, the utmost in their power, for the Church of England, and the British Constitution, while they contended, upon Political grounds, for the impolicy and danger of conceding these Claims; but, as they reasoned without reference to the Spiritual part of the Question, they may be considered, as occupying an out-work, instead of the citadel. You, Sir, have, however, ventured much further, and have abandoned both citadel and out-works together; for you not only leave the Protestant Constitution to shift for itself, when you argue, that it can take no Political injury, but you equally consign the Protestant Church to its fate, when you

sink all notice of the Spiritual dangers which threaten it, and treat the anxieties, which are entertained by so many of its Members, as chimerical and groundless. Thus far of the sins of omission, which characterised your public defence of Mr. PLUNKETT'S Bill. I shall consider in my next, the sins of commission, which appear in it ;

And am, Dear Sir,
Your most obedient and faithful Servant,

AMICUS PROTESTANS.

LETTER XXII.

DEAR SIR,

Your public defence of the Romish Claims, opens with a hypothetical intimation that stopping short with "conceding the elective franchise to the Irish Catholics, was a gross error in policy, and a violation of justice," which is followed by an assertion, that "there is the greatest danger in remaining in our present situation, while in advancing further, and pursuing the course recommended by this Bill, there would be *not only the greatest expediency, but the greatest security.*" So that we have here, the striking inconsistency of a Protestant Legislator, of high Religious professions, anxious to do more for Popery, than she herself would a few years since have dared to ask ; and, although the warmest Protestant advocates of the Romish Elective Franchise, renounced when they sought it, all intention of ever proceeding an inch beyond it, as both inexpedient and hazardous, and accepted that concession, on the express condition of the Roman Catholics being content with it, and asking no more ; you, Sir, upon the modern Roman Catholics, and their Protestant allies, now declaring they are not content, and must have more, are justifying their importunate demands—are denying a danger once admitted, even by the advocates of the Claims themselves ; and, standing on the Pisgah of an unsound and giddy elevation, are seeing, or dreaming you see,

in the distant and unclouded horizon—1st, “ *the greatest danger in remaining as we are,*” that is to say, in remaining Protestant, free, and happy; 2dly, “ *the greatest expediency in advancing further, and passing Mr. PLUNKET’s Bill*”—that is, in permitting Papists to be Members of both Houses of Legislation, Privy Councillors, Judges, Officers of State, Colonial Governors, Sheriffs, and Magistrates; and 3dly, “ *the greatest security,*” in the same measure, that is, the greatest security to a Church and Constitution, which are fundamentally and exclusively Protestant, in making such revolutionary and radical changes in the very essence and substance of the Church and State, as no real Protestant ever contemplated without dismay, before that liberal and loving æra in which we have the delightful misfortune of living—an æra in which, as was once happily said of a similar age of gold, men are dispensed from the love of their neighbour, by their love of the Tartars and Caffrees.

The next point taken by you, is, that one of the discoveries reserved for late times, is that “ *persecution for Religious opinions, is not only one of the wickedest, but one of the weakest things in the world;*” you then attempt to identify the original conquest, and subsequent government of Ireland, with “ *a persecution for Religious opinions;*” and after alledging that the claims of the Catholics ought to have been conceded at the Union, as guaranteed by Mr. PITT, and that you knew of nothing more calculated to keep the people of Ireland in a state of insurrection, than the speech of a certain Member, you leave the inference full and direct, that all hostility to the Catholic Claims, is a persecution for Religious opinions; therefore, that all who lend themselves to such persecution, are both weak and wicked—that the Romish Claims became due at the Irish Union, as a matter of right—and that to oppose them now, is to keep the people of Ireland in a state of insurrection.

Upon these remarks I observe—1st. That, to put the opposition to the Roman Catholic Claims, even by implication, upon the footing of A RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION, is as illogi-

deal as it is unjust: but as I mean to consider this point in replying to MELANCTHON, I shall not dwell upon it now.

2dly. The circumstance of Mr. PITT, having given a pledge for this concession at the time of the Union, has never been proved; but if he did so, it could only be the pledge of an Individual, to which pledge, not even the Cabinet—much less the Parliament—and, least of all, the KING, ever became parties. It is inconsistent with all we know of Mr. PITT's character, for prudence and policy, to imagine that he ever promised what he must have known was beyond his power to perform: The proof of such a promise, if he had ever given it, would not be difficult to procure; but if it could be produced (as it never has been, and perhaps never will be), I should still contend, that while Mr. PITT had no moral right to stake the Church of England, and the British Constitution, even for the political measure of the Union (however desirable in itself), so the opinion, which he is supposed to have formed in favour of the Claims, (however entitled to respect) was not infallible, and must, after all, be received with such allowance as is due to the opinion of a Statesman, who cannot, in the utmost judgment of charity, be supposed to have entered far into the spiritual part of the subject, nor to have viewed it in relation to the Church of Christ, and the interests of vital Religion.

3dly. With respect to your apprehensions of Irish insurrection in consequence of any arguments against the Claims, or of any opposition offered to them, I would say with Dr. YOUNG:

“ Be good—and let Heav'n answer for the rest.”

Duty is ours—events are not. It is rather a curious circumstance that Mr. DANIEL O'CONNELL, the Romish Advocate of the Claims, feels the same apprehension of insurrection from *the passing of the Relief Bill*, as you, Sir, entertained from the Speeches against it. In the *Dublin Patriot*, of the 1st of May, 1821, we find this Gentleman congratulating his countrymen, on the overthrow of the Bill, in the following terms:—“ I speak advisedly, when I say that a sanguinary

insurrection would, I am convinced, have immediately followed his enactments." Such was the gratitude which (if Mr. O'CONNELL is to be believed), was to have followed the boon, which we were taught to believe, we were about to confer on our Romish countrymen.

With regard, Sir, to your own apprehensions, I would observe that, if it be once admitted that the Religion of the State is the Religion of Holy Scripture, I apprehend we may fairly look for the blessing of GOD, upon our continuing to stand by that profession of faith, rather than upon our contributing to the extension and support of one which we profess to be unscriptural in itself, and perilous to the soul. If the national faith be not from above, the sooner we abandon its defence the better; but if it be, let us "quit ourselves like men," in spite of the terrors of insurrection. To surrender our privileges, for fear we may lose them, and to throw down our arms, because we may be beat, will resemble the miserable policy of HENRY IV. of France, who renounced even his Religion, in order to save his life, notwithstanding that the ALMIGHTY had saved him, when a Protestant, from the Popish Massacre of St. Bartholomew, and the Religious convulsions which followed it. Scarcely had he apostatized from the Protestant faith, when the very event happened, which he had changed his Religion in order to avoid, and he perished by the hands of a Papist!—If we can find no better reason, for conceding the Romish Claims, than that Ireland may be preserved from insurrection, ought we not to be certified that the very insurrection we dread may not be a necessary consequence of our folly, and a judicial punishment of HIM (who has saved us hitherto) for our distrust of his continued Providence, and our desertion of that cause which he has honoured and protected as his own, against a world in arms? Will you, Sir, undertake to shew, that when all but the Throne and the Church shall have been surrendered by that timid policy which shrinks from maintaining the position which GOD has assigned to us, we shall not, after all, be involved in an insurrection, in order to de-

feed the last fastnesses which Romish encroachment, and Protestant indifference shall then have left us ; or can you shew that when so much shall have been abandoned, and so little be left, we shall not contend with infinitely less chance of success than under our present circumstances ? Away then with the alarm of insurrection as a consequence of duty, and adopting the expressive language of our first Poet, let us exclaim—

———“ If at our heels all hell should rise,
 With blackest insurrection to confound
 Heaven’s purest light———
 ————th’ ethereal mould
 Incapable of stain would soon expel
 Her mischief, and purge off the baser fire
 Victorious !———

I shall consider some other of your arguments in my next ;
 And am, Dear Sir,
 Your obedient humble Servant,
 AMICUS PROTESTANS.

LETTER XXIII.

DEAR SIR,

It is humorously observed by DIODATI, that although we are commanded to forgive our Enemies, we are not commanded to forgive our FRIENDS. It is with something of this indisposition to forgiveness, that I contemplate your public apology, for the Romish Claims.

The next allegation, in such public defence is, that “ sooner or later, whether safely or not, the Catholics must become the depositories of Political Power.” This impression, is certainly, just such an one, as the Roman Catholics would wish a Protestant Parliament to entertain, upon the same principle, that a band of robbers, having a design upon your house, or mine, would wish to have it understood by their right owners, that they must, sooner or later, succeed in

their object. Let this feeling once become general, in respect of the Papists, or any other foes of our Religion, and there is an end of every struggle to preserve it, precisely as it would have happened in the last war, that the Enemies of our Liberty and Existence, would have accomplished their purpose with ease and celerity, if they could once have led us, by such a paralyzing suggestion, to conclude, that exertion was hopeless, and despair a duty. In this case, we might have saved ourselves the trouble of fighting the Battles of the Nile, and of Waterloo, and, instead of shutting our doors against the French Revolution, surrendered to the despoiler, without a struggle. I venture, Sir, to question the necessity, which you seem to have thus established, as an axiom; namely, that the Roman Catholics **MUST** obtain Political Power; and, I further venture to suggest, whether it would not be more consistent with the Profession of the Reformed Faith, as understood at the Revolution, to do our utmost to prevent their obtaining it, and not tamely to surrender those transcendant privileges, which England's best blood has flowed to secure, in every period of her History. The recognition of such a principle, as that the Roman Catholics, must, eventually, succeed in their object, is too full of sophistry, and peril, to permit its admission for an instant. It is sophistical, as it begs the question of their deserving success, by assuming the certainty of success; and it is dangerous, as tending to discourage resistance to the Claims, by first voting all resistance to be useless. You will not have forgotten, Sir, that one great character assigned to the Romish system, in the Prophetical Records of unerring Truth, is the Delusion under which it would be enabled to place the minds of men, as to the probability of its eventual triumph; inducing them to exclaim, under a sense of the magnitude of the power, and the hopelessness of resistance, "Who is like unto the Beast—*who is able to make war with him?*" Thus much, Sir, for the fallacy of conceding the Romish Claims; merely because, sooner or later, we *must* concede them; but since you remark, that this concession will take place, "when

ther safely or not," I put it to your consideration, *personally*, as you here seem to admit, at least, the possibility of danger, in the concession; whether other than Religious Legislators, should not be left to incur this great Moral and Political hazard, and whether, if evil, should, after all, ensue, it will not be a bitter aggravation of that evil, to yourself, and your friends, that you, and they, had, in spite of some earnest and affectionate admonitions, contributed to light the funeral pile of your Church, and your Country. Your old favourite, the celebrated Dr. OWEN, speaking of the disappointed hopes, of the friends of the Romish Claims, in his day, observes, "No sort of men will be given up to more furious reflections, first on themselves, and then on others, than they will be, when they find themselves ensnared. They, who on such occasions, have neither deceived themselves, nor been deceived by others, may enjoy a sedate tranquillity of mind, in all that shall befall them; but, these, when they have digested the shame of being deluded, will be restless in their minds."

Your next point is, "that no Catholic will be satisfied with any concession, short of the privilege of being eligible to sit in Parliament," and you then ask, "what evil is to be apprehended from this concession, in its fullest extent? If there was any Catholic, who had bad feelings towards that House," (you) "would rather bring him into it, and thus give him an opportunity of correcting his errors." In reference to the "bad feelings" here supposed, towards the House of Commons, I for one, by no means wish to impute this crime, to Modern Roman Catholics, although they were certainly not the best feelings, towards either House of Parliament, which once led their progenitors, to the conception of such a project, as annihilating both the one and the other House, by what was significantly termed, (in the celebrated Letter to Lord MONTEAGLE), "*a great blow*." Although, however, I am willing to believe, that in these liberal times, no Roman Catholic entertains any bad feelings towards the House of Commons, as such, it is evident, that while he continues a

Roman Catholic, he must entertain bad feelings towards the Religion of the House of Commons—that he cannot, unless he be an Apostate, or a Hypocrite, regard that Religion, or the Laws which at present maintain it, with attachment or affection, and that, as holding the Spiritual Supremacy, of a foreign Potentate, and bound by the solemn obligations of another Faith, he is utterly unfit to assist, in making Laws for a Protestant Church and Empire.

With respect to the experiment of bringing him into Parliament, *in order to correct his errors*, it is worth considering, whether, in endeavouring to perform a cure upon Roman Catholics, we may not, by the contact, expose our Protestant Parliament, and through it, our Protestant Country, to the double danger, of Religious and Political infection. The apprehension of danger, from the Professors of Romish Principles occupying the seats of Legislature and Government, is certainly not so powerful, or general, as formerly, but should the same danger really exist, as I have so fully endeavoured to shew that it does, we have only to consider the case of a General Election; and who will have a right to object to a Candidate, because he is a Papist, when the United Parliament shall have first pronounced, that the Profession of Popery is, and ought to be, no longer an objection of State? Apply this consideration, to the introduction of Members into the House of Commons, under other influence, and by other means, (not necessary to be here enumerated), and then ask yourself, who that possesses influence, would be likely to expose himself to the charge of Bigotry, by making invidious distinctions, where the wisdom of Parliament makes none? Apply the same consideration, to the case of any avowed Roman Catholic, or nominal Protestant, (no matter whether in or out of the Peerage), having to exercise certain rights, as little necessary to be more plainly described. Apply such principle, finally, to the State necessity, which may seem to justify the employment of Roman Catholics, in judicial and executive trusts, whose whole Political Principles, are in unison with Arbitrary Power; and who owe their Religious existence, to the influ-

face of the Ancient and Orthodox Doctrines of "Passive Obedience," and "Non-resistance," and can any one, who considers the operation of these and similar points, doubt, that a sensible, and even speedy effect, must be produced in one House of Parliament, so far as the *numbers* of Romish Representatives are concerned; and who, that considers the tenacity of a particular party, united both for counsel and action, by the strongest of all bonds—ever on the alert to improve occasions—and always awake and watchful, whoever may slumber or sleep—who, I say, on considering these things, will dispute the probability, nay, certainty, of these increased numbers affecting, at no very distant time, such fundamental changes, as may render their admission to Parliament, no negative, or neutral measure? I shall resume the consideration of your arguments in my next,

And am, Dear Sir,

Your most obedient and faithful servant,

AMICUS PROTESTANS.

LETTER XXIV.

DEAR SIR,

I resume the consideration of your Speech for the Romish Claims.—You next state, that you "attach great importance, to the growing lights, and diffusion of knowledge, throughout Ireland, and that, when you see Roman Catholics, possessed of intelligence, rank, and property, and every thing entitling them to Political Weight, and Power, you are not for withholding from them those privileges, the concession of which, would tend materially, to our own Peace and Security." Now, that "our own Peace and Security," would be in any way advanced by these concessions, is precisely the point in dispute, and, therefore, a more complete specimen, of the assumed demonstration of the "*Quod est demonstrandum*," was, probably, never before exhibited, than in this memorable *petitio principii*. I would, however,

enquire where these "growing lights, and diffusion of knowledge," appear in Ireland? Certainly not among the Bishops, Priests, or Laity, of the Church of Rome. If any such evidences can be produced, let us have them. If they cannot, you must excuse me, Sir, for reminding you of the ancient, but valuable maxim of Law, "*de non apparentibus, et non existentibus, eadem est ratio.*" Nothing would give me greater pleasure, than to see such Christian and Catholic Principles, in operation. I have looked out, earnestly and anxiously, for the proofs of a better spirit, greater light, and more charity, in the Romish Hierarchy, and Laity, both in England and Ireland, than they formerly displayed, but having, instead of discovering such desiderata, found the direct opposites, of all such estimable qualities, existing in the most malignant form, I have considered it my duty, to adduce those instances publicly, and, I now challenge you, as publicly, either to disprove my statements, or to produce (if you shall be able), any evidences, of a more tolerant, a more liberal, and a more enlightened feeling, on the part of the Rulers, and Members, of the Church of Rome, towards the Church of England, and the Protestant Religion, than has hitherto existed. If you shall neglect to do this, I am content to rest the case, which I have advanced, upon the facts, by which it is supported, and let a Protestant Public judge between us. I wish, however, to be distinctly understood, upon this part of the argument, which respects the diffusion of Education in Ireland. As far as the lower classes of Ireland are concerned, it is not to be doubted, (and I rejoice in the fact), that the Sunday School Society, the Religious Tract Society, and other PROTESTANT Institutions, have done, and are doing, much in the Religious Education of the People, and may THE ALMIGHTY, continue to give them his blessing. The Irish, are gradually acquiring Religious light and knowledge, under their present Instruction: in other words, they are gradually becoming Protestants. Let the present system of teaching, only proceed for a sufficient period, and Ireland, will be so far enlightened, as to emancipate herself, from her degrading

bondage of Romish Idolatry, and Superstition, (a yoke, which
 has long been too heavy for her to bear); in which case, she
 will, under a sense of her proper dignity, and her real in-
 terests, be so far from joining in the senseless cry of her
 deceivers, for "Catholic Emancipation," that she will see her
 real glory and happiness, to lie all another way. If, however,
 while she is but partially enlightened, and only in the infancy
 of her Spiritual existence, the transfer of Political Power, or
 of any considerable portion of that Power, to Popish Legis-
 lators, and Governors, should take place; the inappropriate
 nostrum of this premature experiment, must effectually undo
 all the Religious and Moral good, which is at present doing in
 Ireland. Such men cannot, if they are honest men, either
 love the Religion of the Bible, or endure that their own subjects
 should be wrested from their rule, and become (as they are
 now becoming), Members of a Scriptural Church, and Disci-
 ples of another Master. Popery, in Power, will soon make
 herself known, and felt, by the Bible Societies, Missionary
 Societies, Religious Tract Societies, Sunday School (and other
 Protestant School) Societies, and, in short, by all who shall,
 collectively, or individually, attempt to make, or keep, any
 portion of the Population of Ireland, PROTESTANT. It is
 because I am Protestant enough to wish the People of Ireland
 to be persuaded,—not compelled,—(which God forbid), to be-
 come Protestants, that I would keep Papists, where, and as,
 they are; that is, in a situation, where they cannot hinder
 the extensive good, which is at present effecting, nor exercise
 their unchanged intolerance, over all, or any, of the Religious
 Societies, or Individuals, who are now earnestly labouring,
 for the Spiritual and Eternal Interests, of the Sister Country.
 Prove, Sir, as your hypothesis assumes, that the important
 work of Religious Education, and Evangelical Instruction,
 can go on, under Popish Privy Counsellors, Judges, and
 Legislators, and I will concede one half that you require.
 I have shown, that these Men—their Church—and their Prin-
 ciples, remain the same. Of course, their Practice, must
 continue the same. What then becomes of their "intelligence,

rank, and property," upon the score of which qualities, you now claim to set them up over Protestants? Have the foes and persecutors of the Church of Christ, in any age, wanted for "intelligence, rank, and property?" Really, Sir, it might have been expected, that you, at least, would have required some other requisites for the Government of Protestants, than the ingredients you have specified; but we here find you assuming, (in defiance of all that the pen of History has traced in characters of blood), that provided, the wisdom of this world, the elevation of place, and the influence of property, be only found to meet in Legislators, and Governors, it signifies little or nothing, whether they are Protestants, or Papists. If this be not the plain and evident sense of your argument, I contend, that it has no assignable, or intelligible, meaning. You, expressly demand, "Political Weight and Power," for "Roman Catholics, possessed of intelligence, rank, and property." I humbly, but confidently, affirm, that no conceivable extent, of intelligence, rank, or property, will justify a Protestant Legislature, in giving Political Weight, and Power, in a Protestant Nation, to Men, who are bound both to God and Man, to prefer the Romish Faith, to our own, and to use their utmost exertion, to obtain for that Faith, the Religious, and Political ascendancy, which it deservedly lost, by the verdict of the whole Country, at the Reformation, and the Revolution.

I propose to consider further, in my next, your Speech for the Romish Claims,

And am, Dear Sir,

Your most obedient, humble Servant,

AMICUS PROTESTANS.

LETTER XXV.

DEAR SIR,

In pursuing your public defence of the Romish Claims, you observe that “ instead of possessing a Religion, founded like that of the Ancients, upon delusion, the evidence of ours, rests upon the principles of reason ; and you thence infer, that “ intolerance is as repugnant to its spirit, as it is unnecessary for its support,” which, is to charge with “ intolerance” every opponent of the Roman Catholic Claims, after you had already designated, the same opposition as so much persecution.” These, Sir, are hard words ; but not happening to hold with MIRABEAU, that “ words are things,” I venture to doubt, whether your charge of “ intolerance,” can be any better supported than that of “ persecution.” Your assertion is most true, that the Protestant Religion, is not founded, like the Idolatry of the ancients, upon delusion ; but then you neglect to inform us, and appear, almost to have forgotten, that the Protestant Religion, as Established in Church and State, exists in fundamental, and eternal opposition, to the Idolatry of the MODERNS, as well, as to that of the Ancients ; and, until you shall have the courage openly, to vindicate the Church of Rome, from Idolatry, and shall succeed in the attempt, I must continue to think, that it signifies very little, whether one form of Idol-worship or another, be in question, and that we might as well admit the believers in Polytheism, to political power, as the believers in Transubstantiation—and perhaps, the former, more harmlessly of the two—there being no essential difference (as is abundantly demonstrated, by the first, and ablest, of our Theologians), between a belief in the many Gods of Heathenism, and a belief in the false God of Popery, as exhibited by the Priest, to the adoration of the worshipping multitude, after the performance of that standing miracle, by which his deluded followers are required to believe, in direct contradiction to the testimony of their own senses, that the bread they behold

with their bodily eyes, is absolutely, properly, and essentially, no other than God himself!* It appears to me, therefore, that in choosing only, to introduce the Religion of the Ancient Idolaters, (which was not at all in question) into your argument, to the exclusion of the Religion of the Modern Idolaters, (which was peculiarly in question), you have dealt somewhat hardly by the Ancients, as bearing exclusively, upon their ignorance and corruption, and not dealt fairly by the Protestant Faith, as suppressing all notice of the ignorance and corruption of that Apostate Church, whose Members you now seek to invest with political rank and power. Really, Sir, it is something like throwing dust in our eyes, to remind us of Ancient darkness, and error, and, at the same time, to take no more notice of Modern darkness, and error, than if they had no existence, while in point of fact, the main reason, why the descendants of the English Martyrs, fear to see the adherents of the Church of Rome, in place and power, is, because they believe, they shall behold Modern Idolatry, exalted with them : it not being at all conceivable by us, that the Modern Priests, and Servants of BAAL, would be content to accept of eminent station, upon condition, that they should leave their Religion behind them, or, that they should cease from striving (as they have ever yet done), to gain converts to that Religion, in any, and every way.

Your next recommendation of the Claims, is drawn from the excellence, and amiableness, of certain Members of the Romish Church, and you particularly instance FENELON, as having been " sent from Heaven to bless mankind, with the mildness of his wisdom, and the efficacy of his example." Perhaps, Sir, a more unfortunate reference, in proof of your

* A Romish Missionary, after having taken great pains to instruct a Chinese Disciple, in Christianity, asked him before a large assembly, " How many Gods there were ?" To which the pupil, very unexpectedly answered " None." " None !" exclaimed the astonished Priest, " why have I not always told you there was one?" " Yes, Sir," replied the new Convert, " but you know I ate him yesterday!"

position, could hardly have been selected than this. No one has more forcibly inculcated the danger of putting the Scriptures into the hands of the people (a fundamental tenet of Popery,) than the Romish Archbishop, whom you thus eulogize as "sent from Heaven to bless mankind." I refer more particularly, to his well known "Letter to the Bishop of ARRAS," a Letter, Sir, which; however, yourself, and other Protestant Advocates of the Romish Claims, may happen to forget, will never be forgotten by any Roman Catholic, who desires to prove upon Episcopal Authority, that the general circulation of the Holy Scriptures; is eminently hazardous, and that the Romish Church alone, is the proper judge, when, where, and by whom, they may be read. This single fact, may serve to show, that however respectable, and amiable, an individual, may be *personally*, who is in the Communion of the Church of Rome, he will inevitably be hampered by his system, and influenced by its unscriptural, and fatal errors. I am not quarrelling with FENELON, for this unchristian blunder, but, I do think it an extraordinary circumstance, that you, Sir, as a Vice-President, of the British and Foreign Bible Society, should have selected that particular Prelate, for this splendid eulogy, before a British House of Commons, when he would notoriously have shut up the Scriptures from the Laity, and when he strenuously maintains the duty of the people, to submit to the teaching of their Priesthood, in preference to the instruction of the word of GOD. In proof that I am justified in this statement of his sentiments, I refer to this celebrated Letter, of which an English translation was published as recently as the year 1816, by a Romish Priest of Birmingham, who has also favoured the British Public, with a printed account of a MIRACLE, *performed by himself* in the year 1815, upon a woman possessed with a Devil, which he has the audacity to declare, that he himself cast out! This Letter of FENELON is also fully quoted by Mr. BLAIR, in the very admirable Series of Letters, which he publicly addressed to you in 1819, (See Letter 23d, p. 152 ;) and how it could have happened, that with such an open testimony against the

Anti-scriptural Theology of FENELON, almost in every one's hand, you should have expected the House of Commons and the Public, to believe that such a man was sent from Heaven to bless that world, from which he would thus have withheld the Bible, as "the Book of Heretics, whose familiar use gave rise to the sects of Protestants."—How, I say, you could as a Protestant Legislator, have expected to set up such a character in a Protestant Parliament, and to have rendered the Romish Claims more palatable to the nation, by connecting that character with those Claims, remains to be explained.

My next will continue my observations on your public defence of the Romish Claims.

I am, Dear Sir,

Your very obedient and faithful Servant,

AMICUS PROTESTANS.

LETTER XXVI.

DEAR SIR,

Your concluding point is, that "England is a country of Law, but that in Ireland, the inhabitants may be said to be remarkable, rather for an habitual abhorrence, than for an accustomed observance of the Law," and you thence argue, that "Irish Catholics, admitted into a participation of the blessings derived from the British Constitution, will be improved in character, ameliorated in condition, and their National habits and prejudices, softened and assuaged." This is, certainly, a *beau ideal*. Let us, however, examine it. It supposes, that the lower classes of Roman Catholics in Ireland, if the door to Political Power were open for those of their own body, who are better clothed, and better taught, would at once emerge from the barbarous and brutal condition, in which we at present find them, and that nothing short of a Moral regeneration would be produced, by the Political remedy, which is commonly called, "Catholic Emancipation," under which the Members of the Papacy,

would take their seats in the Senate, on the Bench, and at the Council Board; but who does not see, that the well-disposed labourer, who now subsists in his mud-built hovel, upon butter-milk, and potatoes, will fare no better, when his leaders shall have obtained the object of their ambition; and what honest man does not deprecate the delusion, by which the ignorant villager is profligately invited to entertain such hopes, as his flatterers know will never be realized? In reference to the criminal part of the Roman Catholic population, it is equally idle to suppose, that the mere concession of the Claims, will change the hearts and dispositions of those, who now subsist on rapine, and make a trade of blood. Such men, are only to be reached, and renewed, by the Gospel of CHRIST, but the nostrum of "Catholic Emancipation," will only leave them far worse than it finds them, precisely in that proportion, in which it shall give greater credit, and influence, to an Apostate Church, a Tyrannical Priesthood, and a Corrupted Christianity. The greater the moral and mental ignorance, is, which prevails in Ireland, the more certain, and powerful, will be the influence of degrading Superstitions, and gross Vices; and ignorance, both moral and mental, is inseparable from Popery. Let Education, instruct and civilize, and let Piety, illuminate and evangelize, and the great work, which you profess to have in view, in Ireland, will be certainly, and effectually, accomplished, without making Papists (as you recommend) "the depositories of Political Power,"—a measure, which is, of all others, the most calculated, to perpetuate the Spiritual Degradation, and confirm, the Mental Bondage, of this fine and generous people. The Head of the Romish Church is so sensible that his "craft is in danger," and that "the great Goddess" of Rome, whom the world has so long worshipped, is likely to be "set at nought" by Protestant Instruction, that he has only lately issued a Bull, against the Bible Schools of Ireland, as the most formidable foes of his Anti-Christian system, of crime and darkness. This Bull, like that nefarious Bull against the English Bible Society, which

was also issued by this pretended Vicar of the Prince of Peace, may be treated with the contempt it deserves, so long as Protestant Legislators, bear rule in the United Kingdom; but if once that Church, of which this "Man of Sin," is at the head, shall be raised by you, Sir, and by others, to the rank it lost at the Reformation, and its intolerant Members, shall again rear their blood-stained heads, be assured, that such an anathema as this, will be no longer a *brutum fulmen*, or a dead letter, and multitudes will then know, to their cost, what a serpent they have taken to their bosoms. Your great mistake appears to be, a confident expectation, that Protestant Preaching, and Protestant Teaching, must still go on, no matter what may be the Political system in Ireland, and no matter who may administer it; but this is so far from being the case, that Popery must, in the nature of things, consolidate her strength, and increase her influence, in a ten-fold degree, by the proposed concessions, while the exhibition of Vital Religion, and the diffusion of Human Knowledge, will be proportionally discouraged, and put down, by the developement of the intolerant principles of Popery in power. We feel no surprise, when mere worldly politicians, would administer this grand specific of "Catholic Emancipation," for the modern miseries of a Priest-ridden people, whose best Religion, is a refined Idolatry, and whose mental cultivation, is steadily opposed by the Pontiff and Clergy of Rome, who have ever acted on the principle, that "Ignorance is the Mother of Devotion," (as indeed, of such a devotion, it certainly is)—it affords, I say, no matter of surprise, that Politicians, who make no particular profession of Religion, should think, or at least assert, that with Roman Catholics in power, (who have ever been opposed to the extension of Education, and the diffusion of Religious Truth), we shall suddenly come, to have a civilized, and an enlightened people. Such arguments, in such hands, might safely be left to their fate; when, however, such Statesmen as yourself, adopt, and advocate, these mischievous theories, they require particular and public refutation, because, though

equally invalid, and indefensible, from whatever quarter they proceed, they yet acquire, from the sanction of your name, and the influence of your authority, an importance, and a danger, which do not naturally belong to them. Viewing this great question, in its political relations alone, we feel astonished, when you so confidently predicate of an experiment, which the best and wisest amongst us, have agreed in considering, so full of hazard—that it is both safe and expedient; but, on considering the question, in its Theological and Moral connections, and dependencies, we almost doubt the evidence of our senses, when we hear, the public advocate of “Practical Christianity,” pass through a public address, on the most grave and awful question, ever yet propounded in a Christian Assembly, as if, with a studied, and systematic determination, to omit all notice of the solemn bearings of that question, upon the Religion of the Reformed Church, and upon the Professors of the Reformed Religion. Still more are we afflicted, and amazed, at the apparent levity, which, after discarding from consideration, the leading and more appropriate points of the argument; could adopt, with complacency, and recommend, with confidence, the “flat, stale, and unprofitable,” Catholicon of “Emancipation,” (although purloined from the laboratory of every State empiric, for the last thirty years), as the only panacea for a country, the greater part of which, is notoriously bowing down before Idols—enslaved by the grossest superstitions—and immersed in the most palpable darkness. You, Sir, were just the last person in the world, from whom, either the Religious, or the Irreligious, ever expected to hear, that the political quackery of an imposing phrase, like that of “Catholic Emancipation,” was to effect the moral regeneration of Ireland! They supposed, you would never have referred to any meaner instrument, than the rod of MOSES, the power of effectually striking the rock of obduracy, passion, and prejudice, to be found in a Popish population; but they now find, that you anticipate full as much from the use of the harlequin wand, with which Mr. GRATTAN, Mr. FOX, and Mr. SHERIDAN,

expected to shift the scenes, and change the machinery, of that great drama, in which they were all, in their turns, such conspicuous actors. This, in them, Sir, was well; for it was, at least, consistent. They made no other professions, and the public had no right to expect any other results. I leave the application of this reflection, to yourself, with a single verse, which, with all the beauty of poetry, has none of its fiction:—

Erin! thy silent tear shall never cease,
 Erin! thy languid smile shall ne'er increase,
 Till by the Gospel light
 Thy varied tints unite,
 And form, like rainbow bright,
 One arch of peace.

I am, Dear Sir,
 Your most obedient and faithful Servant,

AMICUS PROTESTANS—

P. S. It may be proper to observe, that the Report of Mr. W's Speech, as given in the Old Times, of the 17th March, 1821, is that which I have used in commenting upon such Speech; because, however persons may differ in opinion, respecting the political character of that Paper for some time past, there appears but one opinion, as to the general correctness of its Parliamentary Reports.

LETTER XXVII.

DEAR SIR,

It is probable that many who have followed me through my observations on your public apology for the Romish Claims, may be induced to exclaim of that apology, "*Tantamne rem tam negligenter!*" but indeed, I acquit you altogether of a negligent, or perfunctory, discharge of the dif-

difficult task which you had gratuitously assigned to yourself. You have done as well as any one else, and better than many, what you, above all other men, ought never to have attempted at all. Your difficulty lay in the choice of your subject, for you had a cause in which the eloquence of an Angel, would not have availed him, unless, with one of MILTON's Angels, he had possessed the faculty of making "the worse appear the better reason." Permit me, Sir, however, in all seriousness and sobriety, to inquire why you selected such a cause as the object of your attachment, and the theme of your oratory? Permit me to inquire why, with all the History of the Church and the world full in your face, you deserted a standard under which you had never fought but to conquer, and volunteered your services in the cause of a corrupt Church, condemned by the prophecies of God, abased in the sight of man, and only to be raised, through the medium of Protestant instrumentality, to the exercise of that abused power, which, though it once made her the scourge of real Religion, and the terror of all nations, you now consider to be no more than her right to challenge, and no less than our duty to concede? I know you will affirm (with MELANCTHON) that you deem as ill of the Church of Rome, in a spiritual view, as the strongest opponent of her political Claims; but if this be so, then I contend, that (like him) you have chosen a strange mode of displaying your sentiments, and that so long as men are to "be known by their fruits," so long you are necessarily subjecting yourself, by persisting in your present line of policy, to one of two inconveniences. Either it must be believed, that you do *not* think as hardly of the Anti-Christ of Scripture as you profess; or else that a judicial infatuation is inducing you to imagine that Anti-Christ, can resume the Throne of his Ancient dominion, without becoming more formidable, either spiritually or temporally, to Protestants, than now that he is under the disability of subjection and controul.

I am persuaded, Sir, that if you would be content to exercise only a portion of your old English common sense, you

would soon discover the folly of abetting and favouring either those men, or those measures, which at the same time you profess to condemn and abhor ; and that you would also discern the impossibility of your countrymen giving you credit for the sincerity of a profession which is so completely at variance with your practice. Let us put the case of an invading enemy meditating our national humiliation (under the guise of friendly purposes) as the necessary preliminary to his own exaltation. Would the KING, or the nation, trust a man who, while he might profess to abhor that enemy quite as much as one else, should yet maintain, that the best way to disarm his hostility would be to let him into a share of the Government, and that the readiest way to silence his complaints would be to give him all that he asked, except, perhaps the Throne and the Woolsack ? If this reasoner should further contend that, in spite of innumerable proofs of perjury, cruelty, and profligacy, it was still our duty to give the common enemy another trial, in order to see how he would behave, would such a fallacious mode of argumentation be likely to make any converts ? If it were further notorious that a large proportion of the population (as in Ireland for instance) were of the same Religion, and owned the same Master as the Invader, and, of course, favoured his pretensions, and desired to see him at their head ; would the same logician be believed, if he should still contend that the Religion of the enemy was not likely to be encouraged, by giving its professors increased authority and influence, and that the bias towards a Foreign Allegiance was as little likely to be strengthened by making the warmest adherents, and most faithful subjects, of another Ruler, “ the depositories of political power.” I confess myself, Sir, to labour under some disadvantage in dealing with such arguments as you have advanced for the Romish Claims ; for, as it has been often observed, that the proof of a self-evident truth, is one of the most difficult tasks which can be assigned to us, so, perhaps, the formal refutation of propositions which carry with them their own exposure, is not without its difficulty. I apprehend, however, that after all the logical halo in which

the advocates of the Claims, may involve the real merits of this question, there is no political sophistry which can ever separate such a measure from the interests and existence of the National Church. I am free to admit that the Establishment, considered in a Religious point of view, may sustain a deteriorating change from many circumstances, connected with her secular alliance, her outward prosperity, or other causes; but however she may retrograde, as a Protestant Church, there is, "hope in Israel" concerning her, and "balm, in Gilead" for her every wound; but what power shall arrest, or retard, the process of dissolution in that BODY POLITIC, which shall exhibit the morbid, and monstrous, anatomy of a Protestant Church, and a Popish Legislature—a Protestant King, and Popish Counsellors—Protestant Laws, and Popish Judges—a Protestant Police, and Popish Magistrates—Protestant Colonies, and Popish Governors—a Protestant County, and a Popish Sheriff? Such prodigies, now to be spawned for the first time, can have but one result—the destruction of the Church of England, and the downfall of the Empire.

From yourself, Sir, we certainly had expected other conduct than the avowed defence of Mr. PLUNKETT'S Bill, and we expected it under the most solemn sanctions of your Legislative Office. In the Oath of Supremacy, which you have now so often taken, you have sworn that "no Foreign Prince, Prelate, State, or Potentate, OUGHT TO HAVE any jurisdiction, power, superiority, pre-eminence, or other authority, ECCLESIASTICAL, or SPIRITUAL, within this realm." A main object of the Bill you have publicly supported, is, to secure to the Head of the Romish Church, "Ecclesiastical and Spiritual authority," although, as a salve, it denies to him temporal authority—a professed object of its passing at all, was to relieve the tender consciences of those who cannot consent to admit on oath, that their Foreign Master has no *spiritual* authority, although they are content, for the present, to deny his *temporal* power. But how, Sir, can YOU, consistently with your oath, that this Potentate "ought not to have ECCLESIASTICAL, or SPIRITUAL" (any more than temporal)

" authority, safely support a Bill of this description, by which it is contended (in contravention of your oath), that he OUGHT to have Ecclesiastical and Spiritual authority, and by which the existing law, is so jesuitically explained away as to leave him in undisturbed possession of it? I feel assured that this particular fact, cannot have been present to your mind, when you determined to support such a Bill, and I am not without the hope that it may yet receive your most serious consideration.

I also conjure you, in conclusion, to consider, before another Session shall arrive, the awful responsibility which you are taking upon yourself, in the rejection of that vast accumulation of Religious, of Moral, and of Political, evidence which the experience of ages, has amassed upon this momentous question. " To resist" (says your old friend Dean MILNER, in his posthumous Sermons), " a sufficient evidence, and such evidence as GOD, in his unerring judgment and compassionate providence, thinks proper and expedient for us is highly blameable, and incurs the danger of losing God's blessing." I also intreat you to consider the peculiar inconsistency of your present policy. " It is necessary," says your favourite author Dr. OWEN, " that all those who sincerely own the Protestant Religion, and make it the rule of their living to GOD, in hopes of the eternal enjoyment of him in another world, do Unite in one common design and interest, to oppose the ENTRANCES AND GROWTH OF POPERY among us. And it is a hard thing to persuade rational men that *they* are in earnest for its opposition, and exclusion, who are not willing to do so." It will be a hard thing, Sir, for any Religious man (whether in or out of Parliament) to persuade rational men, at present, that he can advocate the Romish Claims, to a successful issue, without, at the same time, eminently aiding, and assisting, the Romish Church. The things are inseparable, and it is an affront to our understandings to attempt to disjoin them. The Roman Catholics themselves know better, if their Protestant friends do not, and all the unwearied and obtrusive efforts of the Romanists for the

Claims, sufficiently prove how indissoluble **THEY** consider the connection between the grant of those Claims, and the prosperity of their own Church. They know, Sir, if you do not, that with such a fulcrum for their machinery as Legislative and Executive power will afford them, they can move a world. The anxiety of the Papists themselves, for secular authority and power, when the acquisition of Religious Toleration cannot be their object, (since it is already theirs in the fullest sense), speaks with too plain a voice to be misunderstood by any who have "ears to hear." By the measure, Sir, which you advocate, we have every thing to lose, and nothing to gain. To "let well alone," however homely the maxim, is no mean point of wisdom. "Then I thought in my dream," (says JOHN BUNYAN), "that it is easier going out of the way when we are in, than going in when we are out."—Now, Sir, entertaining as I do, the sincerest respect for you: permit me still to express my doubts whether, upon the subject of the Romish Claims, you ever dreamt to better purpose than this?—and, as I know you value the opinions of the early lights of the Reformation, (whether in or out of the Church of England), I wish you to lay your hand on your heart, and ask yourself whether you really believe that JOHN BUNYAN and RICHARD BAXTER, JOHN FLAVEL and Dr. OWEN, would, *under any circumstances*, or, *at any period*, have given power to Popery.

I observe, in conclusion, that in the rejection of the late Bill, we have been once more delivered from impending ruin by the signal, unmerited, and, perhaps, too little regarded providence of GOD—we have been spared not only in defiance of our enemies, but in spite of our FRIENDS, and this fact, above every other, speaks our deliverance to be divine. Another short interval has thus been afforded for National humiliation, Protestant exertion, and Preparation for trial—Whether another year may be crowned with a similar mercy is only known to him "who knoweth all things," but, assuredly, while we are bound to be thankful, we ought to rejoice with trembling. In looking to this extraordinary deli-

verance, so far as second causes were instrumental in affecting it, I cannot withhold my most sincere expressions of acknowledgment to the 26 Spiritual Peers, who formed so large a portion of the Majority of 39, by which this Bill was rejected. As a Member of the Establishment, I am anxious to acknowledge my obligations to those Bishops, who, under GOD, have thus saved the Church over which they preside, and that, not for the first time. How far one of that venerable Bench, who has for many years constantly resided on the sea coast of Somersetshire, under the entire incapacity (from the afflicting loss of sight), of discharging all the active functions of life, but who has never failed for several successive Sessions to transmit his proxy FOR THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CLAIMS; how far, I say, such a course of conduct is reconcileable with an Ordination Vow, and with Episcopal obligations, it is not my province to enquire—I only advert to the fact, in the way of caution to those distinguished characters who have the selection of fit persons for the Episcopal Office, before they again recommend those to a station of such eminent responsibility, who are pledged to vote systematically in favour of the Roman Catholics, “*per fas atque nefas*” Anglice, “through thick and thin.

I conclude with a single admonition to the People of England, which I cannot clothe in better terms than in the expressive language of Scripture—“NOW GO, STRENGTHEN THYSELF; FOR AT THE RETURN OF THE SEASON, THE SYRIANS WILL AGAIN INVADE THY BORDER.”

I am, Dear Sir,

Your most obedient, faithful Servant,

AMICUS PROTESTANS.

TO MELANCTHON.

LETTER I.

SIR,

After no fewer than seven of my letters to Mr. WILBERFORCE, had appeared before the public, you entered the lists as the Champion of that Gentleman, and of the Catholic Cause, by a Letter, dated "Clapham Common, April 2nd," in which Letter, you avowedly answer my Seventh Letter alone, and avoid all notice of the Six which had preceded it!—Of this extraordinary opening of your correspondence, I do not intend to complain, since, in a free country like our own, it is, doubtless, as competent to any third person to appear in a literary controversy, at whatever period of it he may prefer, as it is competent to him to select for examination, whatever arguments of his opponent, he may think proper, and to let such of them alone, as he may deem less tractable: I merely advert to the fact, as exhibiting, at least, a singular feature in literary polemics, and proceed to my promised rejoinder.

You begin, by an eloquent protest against Popery, as both unscriptural in its Theological tenets, and perilous in its Political tendencies, and as you take frequent occasion to insist on your abhorrence of Popery, both as a Christian, and an Englishman, I would observe, once for all, that as a plain man, and a Protestant, I, for one, am wholly unable to reconcile professions of this nature, with the unqualified advocacy of the Roman Catholic Claims. That you believe you abominate such a system as Popery, I do not for an instant doubt, and I therefore acquit you of all hypocrisy; but, to suppose, that you may perchance lie under the error of imagining yourself a better Protestant than you really are, and may therefore, pos-

sibly be the subject of self-deception, will, I hope, be considered, no breach of charity, as involving no imputation on your moral honesty. The estimate which a man may form of the character and extent of his own Protestantism, upon a review of his own sentiments, cannot be admitted as an infallible criterion of the actual state of his mind; any more than the conclusion to which he may come, upon a review of his spiritual character, can, at all times, be admitted, as of itself, an evidence, of his real condition—we all know, that, in this latter case, a defective conscience, may conduct him to an erroneous conclusion in regard to himself, without, in any degree, involving him in the imputation of a desire to impose upon others; and thus, in reference to the quality and extent of his Protestantism, it is equally possible, that in the absence of some higher, and less equivocal test, than in the present prosperous state of the Church, he can have had the opportunity of resorting to, he may be greatly over-rating both his knowledge of, and attachment to, the doctrines of the Reformation, and (however unconsciously to himself) be taking credit for principles and sentiments, which will not bear the guage of a minute examination—at all events, it may be worth while for such a reasoner to consider, whether, while his arguments for the outward aggrandizement and exaltation of the Church of Rome, are so numerous and ingenious, he can reasonably expect the Protestant world to believe, that he holds the principles and dogmas of that Church, in the abhorrence which he professes, or whether, since men are to be known by their fruits, he can honestly expect, that we should be simple-hearted enough to imagine, that a modern Protestant, who would liberally give the Roman Catholics all they ask, is to be deemed as good a friend of the Church of Christ, as the illustrious men of a former age, who, at least, understood the genius and character of Popery, as well as their descendants, and who would give place to her in nothing, “no not for an hour.”

It is necessary, Sir, on this subject, to speak plainly: I must therefore beg leave, in the very outset, to question the

validity of all those pretensions to just and accurate feeling, on the vital and paramount interests of the Reformed Church, which are now so boldly advanced by yourself, and other Protestant advocates of Popery. It certainly was not thus, that our Forefathers "resisted unto blood, striving against Sin," nor am I aware of any dispensation, in virtue of which, they, who now call themselves Protestants, can claim to serve two Masters, and yet, expect it to be understood, that they are only attached to one. I am well aware, that, in a certain quarter, it will be deemed the perfection of uncharitableness, to suggest any doubts, as to the attachment of our neighbour to the Protestant Church; as it would be in other quarters, to venture on an intimation, that "all are not Israel, who are of Israel," but it must not be forgotten, that in both these cases, the very absence of all suspicion, on the part of those who may possibly be the subjects of error, is, itself, the best evidence of their need of self-examination, and enquiry; and that they are, perhaps, the last persons, competent to form a judgment on their own case, who least suspect the probability of their being mistaken.

In immediate connection with your opening professions of abhorrence, for the whole Ecclesiastical system of Popery, stands the open assertion of your opinion, that "the present Claims of the Catholics, ought to be unhesitatingly granted," an opinion, which exposes you to the imputation both of inconsistency, and temerity, since it assumes, at once, that none of the odious qualities, which you yourself ascribe to Popery, can be injurious to the Nation, when the Members of that system, shall possess equal rights with Protestants. The *inconsistency* of your reasoning, will appear thus—You designate Popery,—1st, as "one of the most infamous of im-
 "postures, that ever insulted the human understanding, or
 "degraded the human heart:"—2ndly, as "Politically inju-
 "rious in the highest degree, affecting equally the proper
 "dignity of the Crown, and the true Liberty of the People:"
 "—3dly, that "time flows in vain for it, and that it is, with
 "all its errors, and mischiefs, in spite of the course of im-

"provement, and the march of mind, unchanged, and unchangeable:"—and 4thly, that "it is, and ever must be, in spirit, and in action, irreconcilably hostile, to the genius of a Protestant Government; and the interests of a Protestant Establishment." Now, I venture to affirm, that to draw from premises thus laid down by yourself, that "the Catholic Claims, ought to be unhesitatingly granted," is eminently *inconsistent*, since they are premises, which cannot, legitimately, conduct any sound reasoner to such a conclusion; and, that your argument is full of hardihood, and temerity, is equally manifest, because, so long as it is barely possible that you may be mistaken, in supposing, that danger will not follow the entire, or divided, possession of power, by the Roman Catholics; so long will it be a hazardous, and unwise experiment, to subject the Government in Church and State, to what must be, at all events, a risk, the issue of which, as it cannot be calculated by the most sagacious, would only be invited by the most presumptuous.

Surely, Sir, you must have effected an insurance for your country, upon a bankrupt and insolvent capital, when, in the face of such admissions, respecting the dangers of Popery, you still magnanimously assure us, that we have nothing to fear from it. That our existence might be secured for a season, I shall not deny, but, in the event of combustion, or shipwreck, where shall we fly for reimbursement, and protection? We shall have abandoned a certain advantage, for an uncertain speculation—a substance, for a shadow! We shall, indeed, enjoy a reversionary interest in all your promises, in their complete entirety, but what will they avail us? The experience of all ages was against them, when they were given; and if it should so happen, that the result of another trial, should complete the accumulated series of evidence we already possess, we shall only have our own simplicity, and folly, to blame for the consequence. I am free to confess, that I have been charged by you, with trusting too implicitly to conjectures of evil, in regard to the future. The difference, however, between us, I take to be

of this nature, and it is not slight:—I argue to the future from the past; you look forward, with a sovereign contempt, for Antiquity, and, without troubling yourself with the documents of History, or the evidence of Experience. I find a Snake in the way, that I believe will bite, because, it always did so, before it was rendered innoxious by certain physical obstacles. You are for restoring this reptile to animation, and setting it at liberty, under a conviction, (believed, or professed), that its nature will be changed with its condition,—that it will be overwhelmed with gratitude, and never bite any more. All this, indeed, may be very true, but, if it should; then *Æsop* might have spared his pains, and Snakes must have been scandalously misrepresented, from the period of the Fall, until the present æra of liberality, and light, which, it seems, has set every thing to rights, and corrected all sorts of Prejudice, and Bigotry.

It is impossible to reason, with any chance of correctness, respecting the future, except from what we know of the past; and, therefore, when you dispute, or deny, the applicability of former facts to future events, you reject the only light which can be shed, upon the otherwise pathless tract which lies before us. We cannot be positively certain, that if we cultivate, and tend, the Deadly Nightshade, it will produce its poisonous berries; but, former experience suggests, the strong probability of such a result: and, acting on our knowledge of the past, we abstain from contributing towards the production, or growth of evil. If you can persuade the Protestant public, to unlearn all that they have ever been taught; to forget all that they have ever read; and to discredit all that they have ever believed; the question, between the Roman Catholics and ourselves, is at an end, and the sooner we burn our books, the better.

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient humble Servant,

AMICUS PROTESTANS.

LETTER II.

SIR,

You proceed to contend, that all the accumulation of evidence which has been produced, against the spiritual and moral corruptions of the Papacy, and against the intolerance, bigotry, and cruelty, of such a system, afford no argument whatever, against conceding the Claims, because, "we are legislating, not for the Clergy, but for the Laity," but venture to deny, in limine, that it is possible to satisfy the Roman Catholic Laity, by any legislation, which shall not satisfy the Clergy:—in other words, which shall not give influence, and power, to their common Church, and in the same proportion, aid a cause, which is as essentially opposite to the cause of Protestantism, as darkness is opposite to light.

Since the period, when certain disabilities, affecting the exercise of Religious Worship, and the acquisition, and transmission, of property, were removed by the Legislature, from the Romish Laity, it has become impossible, so to help that Laity, by any further enactments, as shall not, at the same time, help the Clergy, and the Church, of Rome. The interests of these bodies, may be separated in theory, both by interested, and ingenious reasoners, but they never can be disunited in practice; and, among other proofs of this, we need only advert to the question, of admitting Roman Catholics, to Seats in either House of Parliament. It is notorious, that many persons (among others, the late Speaker of the House of Commons), made a stand at this point,* but what said both

* "There is much ground for apprehension," (said this distinguished Individual, in his celebrated Speech of the 24th May, 1813), "in the Roman Catholics sitting here collectively, as a body—their peculiarity of connection, must, necessarily, produce that combination of strength, which, coalescing in critical times, with all the other embodied discontent, incident to a popular state, would produce an overwhelming force, and endanger the general establishments of the country." After which he adds, "I feel it incumbent on me to repeat, that, in my

the Catholic Clergy and Laity,—“ We will lose our Bill, rather than take it on the terms of exclusion from Parliament.” Had seats been conceded, Roman Catholics would, of course, have become the repealers, and makers of laws, and, however some may chuse to refer their solicitude, for the representative franchise, to the mere abstract love of sitting on the same benches with their neighbours, or of saying, aye, or no, as they might be minded, it is not to be doubted, that a strong conviction, of the advantages to be derived by the Romish Church, the Romish Clergy, and the Romish Cause, was the leading motive, in the abandonment of a Bill, which, in its altered form, would not have secured to the Romanists the right of legislating, in favour of a Religious system, which they must have been hypocrites not to have preferred, to the established Religion of the country.

Upon this branch of your argument, namely, *the expediency of dividing the Clergy of the Church of Rome, from the Laity*, I observe, that it is utterly hopeless, to expect such a disunion, and manifestly impracticable, to bring it about, by the mode which you suggest. In reference to the hopelessness of the scheme in general, the very account you have yourself given, of the profound ability and address, with which the system of Popery was constructed, for cementing and consolidating its constituent parts, affords a sufficient answer to your own argument, of “ *Divide et impera.*” So long as the Laity of the Church of Rome, continue in its communion, and so long as the Clergy of that Church, are inseparably connected with its existence, so long is it impossible, that the Romish Laity should separate themselves, or be separated, from the Clergy. They must cease to be Roman Catholics, in order to the

“ opinion, the great stand to be made, for the preservation of our Constitution in Church and State, must be against the admission of Roman Catholics, to *Seats in Parliament*; a concession, which would virtually accomplish, and at no distant period, their admission into every other branch of Political Power; an event, which I dread, and deprecate, and shall think it my duty to resist, to the uttermost.”

change which you so ingeniously contemplate:—you admit, that among other contrivances, *ejusdem farinae*. AURICULAR CONFESSION, is one of the bonds, by which the influence of the Romish Clergy, over its Laity, is held together; but where is the Layman of that Church, whether in or out of Parliament, who will renounce the doctrine of Auricular Confession, as a boon for Political Privilege? Which of them will be so captivated by Protestant Concessions, as to deny the supreme authority of his own Church, in matters of faith, merely on account of the Protestant simplicity which shall enable him to do more for that Church, than he has ever been able to effect before? Either these men must themselves, become Protestants, (a consequence, which you can hardly anticipate), or they must become Infidels, (a result, which you can hardly desire), before they can be reasonably expected to dissolve the ties which bind them, by every principle of conscience, to their own Religion, in favour of a Creed, which they have been taught from their infancy, is inconsistent with salvation. It is neither correct in point of fact, nor is it very complimentary to the Romish Laity, to imagine, they will give up their Clergy, any more than their Creed; indeed, it is impossible, that they should abandon the one, without surrendering the other. That men, of such good sense and liberality, as Mr. PLUNKETT, among the Protestants, or Mr. BUTLER, among the Roman Catholics, may be easily brought to see the intolerance and bigotry, which have been displayed by certain High Priests of the Romish Church, is not to be doubted; and indeed, were they slow to discover, or unwilling to admit, the intemperance and folly of some of the leaders of the Roman Catholics, the cause they advocate, would not for a moment detain the attention of a British Legislature; but although respectable men, both in and out of the Romish Church, may come to right conclusions on such a subject, and may deplore, and deprecate, as fatal to their own hopes, the violence, and absurdity, which characterize the proceedings of certain of the Popish Clergy, it is still no less true, that a connection

of an indissoluble nature, subsists between the general body of the Romish Clergy, and that of the Laity, which is quite independent of any secular, or subordinate considerations, and will no more be affected by the indiscretion, or impolicy, of particular Priests, than it will be by the worldly wisdom of particular Laymen. The connection between the two bodies, is founded upon the hold which their mutual attachment to their common Creed, has upon each of them, nor can this alliance be dissolved, but with the conversion of one of the bodies to a purer faith, and a more enlightened system. I suppose, you would, yourself, give up the Romish Priesthood, as not very likely to come over to Protestantism, and the question then, between us is, whether the grant of the required concessions, is likely to bring over the Laity? I think not: at all events, it betrays (I wish to say it without offence), a very slight acquaintance with the History of the Church, and the World, to contend, as you do, that the tenure by which the Romish Clergy hold their influence over the Laity, is slight, when that tenure is sanctioned, and cemented, by a belief in their common Religion, and an adherence to their common policy, and when the uninterrupted experience of so many ages, proves it to be as strong and enduring a tenure, as spiritual and secular obligations can form. Still less is it consistent with all analogy, to suppose, that this influence can be dissolved, by investing the Laity with Political Power, in the idle hope, that such a grant, will throw the Clergy and Laity into opposite interests, and finally lead to the rejection of the Ecclesiastical yoke. The fallacy of the conclusion which you draw from your statement, of the nature of the union between the Clergy and the Laity, may, perhaps, be illustrated somewhat in the following way:—let us suppose a Sovereign at the head of a numerous army, a division of which, including the General at its head, and all the Officers, is found in a state of revolt, other means of bringing them to a sense of duty, proving ineffectual, the King, with the remainder of his army, surrounds them, dispossesses them of their arms, and disbands them. It is, how-

ever, found, that they still combine together, and form a separate establishment, and community. The General, cannot forget, that by his particular "craft," he "got his wealth." The other Officers, in like manner, wait for an opportunity to renew the revolt; these, (to use your own words, of the Romish Priesthood, and the Pope), are "connected indissolubly with each other, and with their General." The common soldiers, however, who (like your Laymen), are "by far the most numerous and important branch; these, become "amalgamated with the great body of society," because, forsooth, being dispossessed of their arms, they are deprived of the means of annoyance, and the prospects of plunder; their minds have, in consequence, assumed a pacific bias, by no means natural to them, and the connection between officer and man, has gradually began to disappear; the Superior, has neither glory nor plunder to propose, and the Private, therefore ceases to regard him as the means of procuring them. We will suppose this state of things to continue, till the whole of this refractory division, has become comparatively harmless members of the community. It is, however, still known, that each individual, is bound by an oath of fidelity, and obedience, to the Commander and Officers; that they all continue on the best terms; and are ready to act together, if any occasion should present itself. Now, will any individual, in possession of his senses, argue, that the surest way of dissolving all connection between the Officers and the Men, would be to restore to the whole division, their arms and ammunition? Would they not be likely to avail themselves of the power, with which they were invested? Would not the Commander know where to find his forces, however "amalgamated with society?" Would not the long neglected discipline be revived, and the Soldier begin to regard his Officer with renewed feelings of allegiance and attachment, and as his probable leader to honour and fortune; and all this from the mere potentiality of mischief, occasioned by the restitution of power? If it be asserted, that all this is problematical, I reply, that my view of the probability of

power producing union, and consolidating strength, is at least as probable, as the opposite theory, namely, that disunion, and disaster, will be the effect of such a grant, and I think, at least, that all History is on my side, while the contrary opinion, rests on a pure hypothesis.

To pursue this imagery a little further—I observe, in reference to your notion, of *the exclusiveness of the interests of the Clergy*, preventing their influence over the Laity, that, however the Soldier may suspect, that his Officer cares almost exclusively for his own honour, and advancement, and however the Officer may imagine that the Soldier cares only for himself, yet that mutiny in an army is comparatively rare: However the two classes may be effected as individuals, yet as constituent and necessary parts of one entire and organised system, they are strongly compacted together. The different parts of an army, whatever their subordinate differences may be, acknowledge a mutual standard and rallying point, so far as the common enemy is concerned. Thus it is also with the Clergy and Laity of the Church of Rome. Their interests, as connected with each other, and their common head (no matter for the argument whether such Head be found in a Pope, or Bishop of Rome, or in a General Ecclesiastical Council), can never be so disjoined, as to let in the foreign relation of a Protestant Church and Cause, since the very nature of their original compact, and the necessity of their continuing to make common cause, will always provide the best security against those separating wedges which able logicians, like yourself, may ever hope to thrust between two bodies “link’d more close than wedded pair.” The testimony of History will afford no support for your theory that the alliance subsisting between the heads of Popery and its Members, is of so infirm a nature as to be dissolved by an accession of political strength; and the simple reason why you can adduce no instance of a Protestant kingdom attempting to disunite its Popish Clergy from their Laity, by extending to each of them a share in its government, is, that the unreasonableness of the scheme as likely to be productive of good, and the overwhelming pro-

hability that it could only be attended with evil, have in every age prevented the adoption of so desperate an experiment. No one indeed will attempt to deny that your scheme has at least the charm of Novelty. It is indeed perfectly original, but perhaps some of my Readers may be disposed to say, with CICERO, “*Magister optimus est Usus.*” You contend indeed that the influence of the Priesthood “during the very “dark ages,” was conditional on “the perpetuity of the ignorance out of which it arose,” and this is true, so far as the ignorance intended is of a Religious character, but where Religious ignorance yet prevails, so far the influence of the Romish Priesthood is as great, even at this moment, as it was in the darkest ages—as in vast portions of the Continent, and in many parts of Ireland—The remedy, then, for this sort of ignorance is, not the knowledge of letters alone, but the knowledge of Divine Truth—in other words—preservation from Popery—and this is the only “Catholic emancipation” from which any real good is to be hoped, either at home or abroad. Now we are indebted to Protestantism alone for the introduction of Evangelical light, and while that light continues to burn, what can we promise ourselves from the introduction of those who are ready to extinguish it, because it tends to make their own darkness manifest? If then, the light of Truth has, under Protestant influence, so greatly increased, is it impossible that under a contrary influence, it might with equal rapidity decline? That such would in all probability be the consequence, I propose to shew hereafter.

I now come to a singular inconsistency in your argument, and one into which, even a logician of less adroitness could hardly have been expected to fall.—After endeavouring to prove that the Romish Priesthood, and Laity, are strongly united and identified, and that the concession of the Claims would be a masterpiece of policy, which would not fail to detach them from each other; you observe, as if in total oblivion of such a position, that these two bodies, “having interests and views decidedly distinct from each other, ought “never to be confounded together, as if they were one har-

“ monious body,” &c. all which reasoning is in direct opposition to your repeated advice that we should strive to dissolve the coalition of the two bodies ; for how can we “ detach “ the Catholic Layman from the Catholic Priest,” as you recommend, if they are not already acting in concert, as “ one harmonious body,” and how can we, as you advise, “ withdraw the Laity from the contracted circle in which “ they have heretofore trodden, and dispose them to act a “ higher and nobler part than to be the dupes and puppets of “ Priestly domination ;” if the Laity have not been to this hour the willing instruments of their own Priesthood ? I must leave it to yourself to reconcile the incongruity of having thus, in the same page, recommended the annihilation of an existing union, accompanied by a distinct proposition for effecting that object, and of having denied, *uno flatu*, that any such union exists ; by which, as it appears to me, you have involved yourself in inextricable contradiction and confusion. Either the Romish Clergy and Laity, are unitedly pursuing a common object—the exaltation and increase of their own Church and system—or your proposition for dissolving their union by means of “ Catholic emancipation,” is out of place, and might have been altogether spared.—In one instant, you suggest that the Romish Hierarchy have not “ the power of “ dragging the Laity after them, and making them the passive instruments of their will,” while in another, you contend that the Relief Bills will detach the Laity from the Clergy, and prevent their being any longer “ the dupes and puppets of Priestly domination. The friends of the Protestant interest might indeed have been dispensed from treating with seriousness such opposing theories ; but as the general tenor of your reasoning appears to suppose the union of the Romish Clergy and Laity to have a real existence, and to suggest the expedient of the Relief Bills, as an effectual mode of dissolving such union, I have chosen to waive the advantage which you have given me, of the “ *reductio ad absurdum*,” and after extracting from the chaotic mass, the only argument which appeared capable of assuming a tangible shape,

I have endeavoured (with what success must be determined by others) to shew that such a view of things cannot be supported.

You conclude your First Letter by a splendid panegyric on the National Establishment, in which I most heartily concur, although not in the conclusion which you draw from it. After painting, in glowing colours, the benefits and blessings of our Protestant Church; you argue that because she is thus great and glorious, there can be no possible danger to apprehend in the proposed concessions—you treat our fears for her safety as absolutely chimerical—and you are pleased, from this giddy elevation of your own argument, to smile with a kind of contemptuous superiority at all those “timid supporters,” (as you are pleased to term them), of our Established Church, to whom you impute a wish for “penal Statutes to support her mild ascendancy.” This view of the excellence, and deserts, of the Church of England, as sufficient to guarantee her security, and preserve her existence, has no more warrant from History, or Experience, than some other of your propositions. It supposes all mankind (the Roman Catholics included) to fall naturally in love with goodness, for its own sake, and to determine on its support, simply because it deserves their patronage. It would persuade all those who know no better, that they have the happiness to live in a world where all that is pure, and just, and amiable, must of necessity command their homage and affection; and rise by its own native elasticity to respect and influence; while all that is base, and secular, and sordid, must in the same proportion, find its proper level, and sink into insignificance and contempt. Against this fallacious reasoning, all History, sacred and profane, rises in judgment—the inspired description of the human heart is equally opposed to such a view; and as well might it be contended that the perfection of our Divine Master, and the integrity of his first followers, would have insured a favourable reception for the cause of Truth, and secured it from opposition and injury, as that our Protestant Church is invulnerable, because of the excellence she

boasts. If indeed, men did not "love darkness rather than light," we might entertain greater hopes from the superior claims which Protestantism offers to their esteem above Popery; and the "grateful millions" whom you claim as the undoubted allies of Piety and Virtue, might, in that case, find their swords leap from their scabbards in defence of the Church of England. But even admitting that all this knight-errantry could be mustered upon an emergency—of which there may perhaps be some doubt—it is surely the part of wisdom not to necessitate the display of so much military prowess, when we are very well off already, and have no need to risk hostilities, in order to enjoy peace.—Let it be granted that the Church of England is at present on her Throne—Was ever Monarch so secure, as to justify a presumptuous contempt of danger, in the gratuitous invitation of a Foreign foe, or the arming of Domestic enemies. Do the numerous Dissenters (the large majority of whom are now, either openly or tacitly, favouring the Romish Claims, for their own objects) afford no reason against any further concessions to those who have far fewer reasons for loving the Church of England, and far more for disliking it, than the Dissenters themselves? Is there nothing to fear from Infidelity—nothing from Indifference—nothing from "the form of Godliness without its power," existing in some cases, even within the pale of the Establishment itself? It must be remembered that all persons are not affected with the same sentiments of veneration and esteem for our National Church, as we must in charity believe to be entertained by a Writer who can polish such a period in praise of the Church, as the concluding paragraph of your First Letter—but I am warned to terminate a Letter which has already grown too large under my hand,

And remain, Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

AMICUS PROTESTANS.

LETTER III.

SIR,

Having replied to my Seventh Letter in your First, (without attempting to answer any of those which preceded it), you now pursue the same privilege of selection and rejection, and write a Second Letter, which takes no notice of my Eighth Letter, and avowedly answers the Ninth alone!

You open this Second Letter by intimating that to refuse, the required concessions, is to exclude the whole Catholic body from the rights and privileges of the CONSTITUTION; and you repeatedly, in the course of this Correspondence treat the refusal of equal power as a species of State disability, to which Roman Catholics were not always subjected, and to which they cannot now be exposed, without doing violence to the CONSTITUTION.—It has appeared to me of so much importance, that this question of the CONSTITUTION should be placed on its right legs, that I must crave your indulgence for examining it somewhat at large. The Truth then is, that the very exclusion in question does in fact form an essential and fundamental part of the British Constitution, as composed of King, Lords, and Commons; because all those several branches of the Legislature, from the Reformation downwards, have been parties to every Statute of exclusion which has been enacted, and have hitherto refused to be parties to such as the Roman Catholics would have had them enact. When therefore you argue, that the political disabilities of the Roman Catholics, either form no part of the Constitution, or are not in unison with its principles, there appears to be some want of information on the very origin and character of the British Constitution. The Roman Catholics, never had the rights they now claim, except when the Throne was Popish, and the Religion of the State was Popish; it is at present no part of the British Constitution, that either of these should be Popish, but the direct contrary; and it is in order to keep them Protestant, that we refuse to subject the

Constitution, as it stands, to the hazard of political experiment, and the practice of Romish intrigue: neither does it by any means follow, that because of their political exclusion the Roman Catholics, as a Body, have the least reason to complain of invasion on their rights. HORNE TOOKE, in his celebrated Letter to LORD ASHBURTON, dated 10th May, 1782, says "Freedom and Security ought assuredly to be equal and universal, but some of the Members of Society may be free and secure, *without having a share in the Government.* The freedom and security of the whole, together with their happiness, may even be advanced by the *exclusion of some*, not from freedom and security, but from *a share in the Government.*" I have the rather chosen to subpœna this witness, because no one suspects him of a blind attachment to power, even in Protestants; or to any reverence for authority, or antiquity, on their own account. I will, however, cite another witness to the same point. "It is one thing (says SWIFT) to tolerate such different forms in Religious worship as are already admitted; but another to leave it in the power of those who are tolerated, to advance their own models upon the ruin of what is already established, which it is natural for all sects to desire, and which they cannot justify, by any consistent principles, if they do not endeavour; and yet which they cannot succeed in, without the utmost danger to the public peace. To prevent these inconveniences, it seems highly just, that all rewards of Trust, Profit, or Dignity, should be given only to those whose principles direct them to preserve the Constitution in all its parts. To argue that no man should on account of conscience, be deprived of the liberty of serving his Country, is a topic which may be equally applied to admit Papists, Atheists, Mahometans, Heathens, and Jews; and it is not altogether improbable, that when those who dislike the Constitution, are so very zealous in their offers for the service of their Country, they are not wholly unminid of their party, or of themselves."

If it could even be conceded, that a certain portion of injury does at present accrue, to the civil rights of some individuals of the Popish Communion, would this form any reason, why the rights, both Civil and Religious, of all Protestants, (who, form the large majority of our population), should be sacrificed to the fanciful theories of the few, who would be hindered, by the measures of exclusion, from the possession of certain places of trust and power? A wise legislature was to provide, not so much against the partial inconvenience, which is inseparable from every form of human Government, as for the general good, which is primarily to be consulted; and hence, HUME, in reference to the period of the Revolution, after noticing the strong attachment of the House of Stuart, to Popery, and, by consequence, to Arbitrary power, remarks, "The only way of destroying at once, all these claims, and pretensions, was to depart from the true hereditary line, and chuse a Prince, who being plainly a creature of the public, and receiving the Crown on conditions, expressed and avowed, found his authority established on the same bottom with the privileges of the people. By electing him in the Royal line, we cut off all hopes of ambitious subjects, who might, in future emergencies, disturb the Government by their cabals and pretensions; by rendering the Crown hereditary in his family, we avoided all the inconveniences of an elective monarchy; and by excluding the lineal heir, we secured all our constitutional limitations, and rendered our Government uniform, and of a piece. The People, cherish Monarchy, because protected by it: the Monarch, favours Liberty, because created by it; and thus, every advantage is obtained by our present Establishment, as far as human skill and wisdom can extend itself."

The only time, when the Roman Catholic was eligible to offices of trust, dignity, and emolument, was when his own Religion was in power; and if it were not an object to keep it out of power, he might enjoy them again: the whole question being, whether Protestants can concede the Roman Catholic

Claims, without, at the same time, surrendering the Protestant Ascendancy. The British Constitution, as affecting Roman Catholics, consisted, and consists, of various Statutes, (including the Act of Settlement), which were passed in the Reigns of Henry 8th, and Edward 6th, of Elizabeth, James 1st, Charles 2nd, William, and Anne, as well as some still earlier Statutes against the Papal Prerogatives, (such as the Statute of Provisors, and that of Premunire), which latter, be it remembered, were even felt necessary, in times when Popery itself bore sway. It is by the operation and protection of these several Statutes, that the Constitution, in Church and State, has long continued a Protestant Constitution, with a Protestant Succession, a Protestant Parliament, and Protestant Rulers, and Judges. Before the Reformation, it was a Roman Catholic Constitution, both in Church and State; and, although the Roman Catholics have been relieved in the late Reign, from the pressure of certain Statutes, in points not involving danger to Protestants, nor affecting the Protestant Ascendancy, yet so much has not yet been conceded, as to prevent the Constitution from being, to all intents and purposes, a Protestant Constitution; and, therefore, it is not, in its essential parts, what it was, while Popery was the Religion of the State, and before the laws in question, had passed, but a totally distinct and different Constitution.

The whole object of the Catholics, in their present claim, is to procure the repeal of those very Statutes, which have hitherto kept the Constitution Protestant, leaving it to be believed, by all who choose to believe it, and "*Qui vult deici deiciat*", that they have still in invention wisdom, of changing the Constitution as it stands, and that those Statutes may be repealed, without any such consequences. Their advocates, forget the various Statutes, by which the Church is kept Protestant, as well as the State, and by which, Protestants are secured in the exercise of their Religion, as well as Papists restrained in theirs; by which the Throne, as well as the Councils, are kept Protestant, and

by which, above all, the Representative Franchise, is refused to Roman Catholics. In your estimate of the nature of that Constitution, from which you complain that these persons are excluded, you coolly pass over the Bill of Rights, as an obsolete document; regard the Coronation Oath, as so much wind; and treat the Act of Settlement, as mere waste paper. The causes, which led to the exclusion of Roman Catholics from Political Power, however painful, and humiliating, to the friends of that Church, are written as with a sun-beam, in the History of the Reformation of Religion, in England, as its origin, and progress, are faithfully detailed by BURNET. As far as the period of the Revolution, and the measures connected with it, are concerned, a single extract from HUME, will be found in perfect unison with our more ancient Historians, and I quote him with the greater satisfaction, as an avowed friend to the toleration of Catholics, so far as respected the most full and free exercise of their Religion.

"The disadvantages" (says he), "of recalling the abdicated family, consist chiefly, *in their Religion*, which is more prejudicial to society, than that established among us, and affords no toleration, peace, or security, to any other Communion. There is no partizan of the Stuarts, but will confess, that the claim of hereditary indefeazible right, and *the Roman Catholic Religion*, are disadvantages in that family. In reality, the reason assigned by the nation, for excluding the race of Stuart, and so many other branches of the Royal Family, is not on account of their hereditary title, but *on account of their Religion*." Again, after speaking of the inconvenience of the foreign possessions of the House of Hanover, he observes, "The Religious persuasion of the House of Stuart, is *an inconvenience of a much deeper die, and would threaten us with much more dismal consequences*. The Roman Catholic Religion, with its train of Priests and Friars, even though unattended with its natural attendants, of Inquisitors, and Stakes, and Gibbets, is *less tolerating*; and not content with dividing the Sacerdotal from the Regal office, (which must be prejudicial in

"any State), it bestows the former on a foreigner, who has
 "always a separate interest from that of the public, and
 "may often have an opposite one. The settlement in the
 "House of Hanover, has taken place. The Princes of that
 "Family, without intrigue, without cabal, without sollicita-
 "tion on their part, have been called to mount our Throne,
 "by the united voice of the whole Legislative Body. They
 "have, since their accession, displayed in all their actions,
 "the utmost mildness, equity, and regard, to the Laws and
 "Constitution. Our own Ministers, our own Parliaments,
 "Ourselves, have governed us; and, if ought ill has befallen
 "us, we can only blame fortune, or ourselves. *What a re-
 "proach must we become among nations, if disgusted with a
 "settlement so deliberately made, and whose conditions, have
 "been so religiously observed, we should throw every thing
 "again into confusion, and by our levity, and rebellious dis-
 "position, prove ourselves totally unfit for any state, but
 "that of absolute slavery, and subjection!"*

The exclusion of Roman Catholics, was effected by various Acts of the Legislature, which became, and have since continued, part and parcel of the law of the land, however exclusive it may seem in its provisions; and this law of exclusion, is not an accident, or an appendage of the Constitution, (as your reasoning would represent it), but the Constitution itself. You argue, indeed, that in the very nature of things, alterations in policy must take place—that legislation is a progressive science, and, that as we gradually become wiser by experience, old laws must incessantly be abrogated, and new ones enacted*—you further intimate, that all who would

* So argues the great advocate of the Romish Church and Cause—the *New Times*. "The first object of the British Legislature, is to preserve the Constitution, in Church and State, but, the resolution to preserve, does not preclude the disposition to improve; and the proudest boast of the British Constitution is, that it contains within itself, a perpetual germ of improvement."—19th April, 1821. True, but to innovate, is sometimes to subvert, and not always to improve; and how will this Editor, or his Clients, certify us, that, what they call *improvement*, shall not be *destruction*?

keep things in a stationary condition, are unfriendly to the march of the human mind, are idly conjuring up phantoms of danger, where none, in reality, exist, and are deterred by the bug-bear of some merely possible, and imaginary evil, from atchieving for their country, the most undoubted, and unqualified good.

It does not appear to me, that your argument against retaining laws, merely because of their age, was particularly called for by any indications which I had previously given, of undue reverence, for what Milton calls the "learned dust" of Antiquity. I believe, there are few persons, (if any), who are disposed, in the present age, to contend, that laws must be spared, merely for their age:—at the same time, it must not be forgotten, that such laws as have grown old in our service, have, at least, *primâ facie* evidence, in their favour; the presumption being, that if they had not been found useful in practice, and proved themselves to be well accommodated to our habits and necessities, they would not have been permitted to grow so old—while, therefore, a distinction will necessarily be taken, by every man of ordinary discernment, between esteem for laws, on account of their remote age, or their intrinsic value; he will not, in judging of a series of laws, think the worse of them, because they are old, and if he should happen to think the better of them, on that account, he will, perhaps, be more likely to be in the right, than otherwise. If, on enquiring further, he should discover, that they have Utility, as well as Antiquity, in their favour, he may, perhaps, be permitted by you, to push his conclusions a little further, and to believe, that in attempting to remove such old and useful laws, he may, probably, do more harm than good: he will endeavour, in his estimate of the character of the laws in question, to ascertain, whether they are of that class, which, like the Ephemera of natural life, are

"Born, and forgot, ten thousand in an hour,"

and may, therefore, be swept away with impunity, or whether they have not

"Grown with our growth, and strengthen'd with our strength,"

till they have become integral parts, of one great system of Morals, and Politics, which will, most probably, be deeply affected by the change ; whether, in short, the laws in question, are of no more importance than those which are repealed, and altered, in every Session, (such as temporary laws, applying to variable circumstances and events), or whether they do not intimately connect themselves with, and powerfully affect, our happiness as Individuals, and our existence as a Nation. It was no contemptible caution, which Pliny gave to Trajan, when he said, “*Metuendum est, ne Respublica legibus fundata, sit legibus eversa.*” The venerable and judicious HOOKER, has managed this argument so ably, that I shall extract a single passage, in proof of my position. “The fervent reproachers of things established by public authority, are always confident, and bold-spirited men ; but their confidence, for the most part ariseth, from too much credit given to their own wits, for which cause, they are seldom free from error. The change of laws, *especially concerning matter of Religion*, must be warily proceeded in. When we abrogate a law, as being ill made, *the whole cause for which it was made, still remaining*, do we not herein revoke our own deed, and upbraid ourselves with folly, yea, all that were makers of it, with oversight and error ? Farther, if it be a law, which the custom and continual practice of many ages, or years, hath confirmed in the minds of men, to alter it, must needs be troublesome, and scandalous. It causeth them to stand in doubt, whether any thing be in itself by nature, either good or evil, and not all things, rather such as men at this, or that time, agree to account of them, when they behold even those things disannulled, and rejected, which Use, had made in a manner natural. What have we to induce men, to the willing obedience and observation of laws, but the weight of so many men’s judgments, as have, with deliberate advice, assented thereunto ; the weight of that long experience which the world hath had thereof, with consent, and good liking ? Notwithstanding, we do not deny alteration of laws, to be sometimes a thing necessary, as when they are unnatural, or impious, or

“ otherwise hurtful to the public community of men, and
 “ against that good, for which human societies were instituted ;
 “ but, as the change of such laws is necessary, so the evidence
 “ that they are such, must be great. If we have neither
 “ voice from Heaven that so pronounceth of them; neither sen-
 “ tence of Men, grounded upon manifest and clear proof, that
 “ they, in whose hands it is to alter them, may, even in heart
 “ and conscience, judge them so; then, to urge alteration, is
 “ to trouble and disturb, without necessity.” [*Ecc. Pol.*
Vol. I. p. 498.]

Now we may easily gather how unwise, and how unsafe, HOOKER, (were he now alive) would consider any fundamental changes in our laws, at the present juncture, from the commendations he bestows in the following passage, upon that illustrious Queen, who was chiefly instrumental in effecting the Reformation of Religion; although Mr. CANNING, has been pleased to ridicule her in the House of Commons, as a “ pious Virgin,” and to derogate from her merit, in a way only befitting the advocate of the Romish Claims. “ When the ruins,” says HOOKER, “ of the House of God, (that House, “ which consisting of Religious Souls, is most immediately the “ precious Temple of the Holy Ghost), were become, not in “ His sight alone, but in the eyes of the whole world, so exceeding great, the first, that with us made way, to repair “ the decays thereof, by destroying Superstition, was King “ Henry the Eighth; the Son and Successor of which famous “ King, as we know, was Edward the Sixth. That work, “ which the one, in such sort had begun, and the other, so “ far proceeded in, was in short space so overthrown, as if “ almost it had never been: till such time as that God, whose “ property is to shew his mercies, (then greatest, when they “ are nearest to be utterly despaired of), caused, in the depth “ of discomfort, and darkness, a most glorious Star to arise, “ and on her head, settled the Crown; whom himself had “ kept as a Lamb from the slaughter of those bloody times, “ that the experience of his goodness, in her own deliver- “ ance, might cause her merciful disposition, to take so much “ the more delight in saving others, whom the like necessity

" should press. What in this behalf hath been done towards
 " nations abroad, the parts of Christendom most afflicted,
 " can best testify. That which especially concerneth our-
 " selves, is the state of the Reformed Religion, a thing, at
 " her coming to the Crown, even raised, as it were, by
 " miracle from the dead: a thing, which we so little hoped
 " to see, that even they which beheld it done, scarcely be-
 " lieved their own senses at the first beholding. Yet, being
 " then brought to pass, thus many years it hath continued
 " standing, by no other worldly mean, but that one only
 " hand, which erected it; that hand, which as no kind of
 " imminent danger could cause at the first to withhold itself;
 " so neither, have the practices, so many, so bloody, follow-
 " ing since, been ever able to make weary. Which grace
 " and favour of Divine assistance, having not in one thing
 " or two, shewed itself, nor for some few days, or years,
 " appeared, but in such sort, so long continued, what can
 " we less thereupon conclude, than that God would teach
 " the world, that the thing which he blesseth, defendeth,
 " and keepeth so strangely, cannot but be of Him?" [*Eccl.*
Pol. Vol. I. p. 505.]

In reference still to the supposed wrong done to the Roman
 Catholic, by his exclusion from the benefits of what you call
 the CONSTITUTION, you argue, that no man should be de-
 prived of any of his rights, unless he be proved unworthy of
 them, or that their loss to him would be productive of some
 general good; but where is the right not now enjoyed by a
 Roman Catholic, which he ever possessed at all, under a Pro-
 testant form of Government? So far, from his having been
 deprived of any rights, as the subject of a Protestant Mo-
 narchy, he possesses more at this moment, than ever he did
 before. You are therefore compelled to suppose a case
 which never had any existence, in order to found an argument
 upon it, which you must despair of supporting. Your position
 would only be correct as applied to all men in a state of nature,
 but the case before us is one in which certain persons have
 chosen for their particular interests to espouse tenets and prin-
 ciples which are at war with the Religious and Political Rights

of others—so long as that system was invested with power, this was proved to be its character; it ceased to enjoy power, because the professors of a purer system found it impossible to endure such a yoke, and therefore shook off the Spiritual and Political bondage of Popery together—since that time, Roman Catholics, undoubtedly, have not possessed all the same Political Rights, which they did when they occupied the seat of power, for had they done so, they would have filled it still. They have, notwithstanding, enjoyed the fullest Religious privileges, and such as themselves when in power, would never yield to Protestants—these, however, it seems, are as nothing in their account. They want other privileges—that is, their Ancient and political privileges—in other words, they want Political Power—the power of making Laws as Senators, and of executing those Laws as Judges, Ministers of State, Magistrates, Sheriffs, and Juries. When Protestants are weary of their own rights—they may concede all this, and more, but Roman Catholic Rights, and Protestant Rights, can never exist together. When therefore, you proceed to argue from the Concessions of the late Reign, to the propriety of making further concessions, you neglect to distinguish between the nature of what has been already conceded by Protestants, and of what is now asked by Roman Catholics—the privileges which have been granted, large and extensive as they are, are not such privileges as convey any portion of political power—they secure and sanction all the Religious rights of Roman Catholics, and they convey many Civil rights in addition, but none of those rights, either Religious or Civil, go to invest Roman Catholics, living under a Protestant Monarchy and Constitution, with Political Power, nor to divest Protestants of that same power which they have long possessed, and exercised, “*Hinc illæ lacrymæ!*” This is the whole gravamen of the present charge. The Advocates of the Claims, may vary the counts in the Declaration of their grievances, but after all, this is the sum and substance of the alledged injury. Protestants conscientiously believe that they cannot, consistently with their own security and existence, elevate to an equality of political rank and power with themselves, the professors of an In-

tolerant Religion, and the advocates of a Foreign Supremacy. These, on the contrary, continue, year after year, to exclaim, "Give us our rights"—a requisition which indeed is specious and plausible on the surface, but which, when it comes to be clothed in an English translation, can only mean—Restore to us the Legislative and Executive power, which we had when England was not a Protestant Realm; and when neither the Parliament—the Church—the State—nor the Laws—were Protestant—our answer is very simple—we wish to keep all these Protestant, now that they are so; and since it is your obvious interest, as well as your manifest duty, to make them otherwise—we say with the Barons of old—" *Nolumus leges Angliæ mutari.*" Your whole argument on this subject, suppose the laws of exclusion to form no part of the British Constitution, but to operate as a sort of suspension of the Constitution, in the case of the Roman Catholics, who, although bound to obedience by the existing law, never gave up his inherent right as a British subject—but if the Laws which exclude Roman Catholics, from Legislative and Executive Power, be a suspension of the Constitution, then is the Protestant ascendancy itself equally a suspension of the Constitution, because those laws of exclusion are coeval with the public profession of the Reformed Faith, and are essential to its preservation. With regard to any abeyant rights of the Roman Catholic, I contend that he lost all right of making and executing laws for a Protestant population, when his own Religion ceased to be the Religion of the State. It is true that he forfeited none of his Religious rights, nor indeed are they in question, for even when he exclaims the most loudly for an equality of Political rights, he is constrained to admit that he enjoys the most ample toleration, and freedom of conscience, under our Protestant Government*. To contend then for his Constitutional

* In the Roman Catholic Petition from the Midland District, to the House of Commons, in a preceding Session, the following remarkable admission occurs.—"Your Petitioners have the happiness of living in a "free country, and under a wise and liberal Legislature, which affords "Religious toleration to all its subjects, leaving them to follow their

rights, in the sense intended by himself, and his advocates, is to "darken counsel by words without knowledge." It is untrue, that he ever possessed any right, (either inherent or acquired) of Governing, and Legislating for, a Protestant Empire—he could not therefore lose a privilege, which he never enjoyed. It has always appeared necessary for the *general* good, since the period of the Reformation, to exclude the professors of a *particular* system from taking part in measures, which affect the vital interests of *the whole* Protestant community. We certainly do not mean to deny that the principle of self-preservation, has some share in conducting us to the conclusion which we have adopted, but, we trust, that we shall not be found without some apology for our conduct, both from Reason and Scripture; and as the Roman Catholics profess to entertain a particular attachment to the Apocrypha, they will excuse my reminding them of two passages which occur in it.—"Receive "a Stranger into thine house, and he will disturb thee, and "turn thee out of thine own."—Ecclesiasticus, Ch. 11.—and again, "Though he humble himself, and go crouching; yet "take good heed, and beware of him.—Set him not by thee, "lest when he hath overthrown thee, he stand up in thy place; "neither let him sit at thy right hand, lest he seek to take thy "seat, and thou at the last remember my words, and be "pricked therewith."—Ibid Ch. 12.

The Roman Catholic, never had the right, while the Church and the State were Protestant, which you now claim for him—namely, the right of making and executing Laws in this Protestant Nation; and I challenge the assertors of his Claims to shew that he had, unless they intend to instance the short-lived triumph of their deluded Patron JAMES II. who was speedily convinced by the Protestants of England, that what he considered as the Constitutional rights of his Roman Catholic subjects, were utterly incompatible with the Protestant ascendancy.

"own rites and discipline, no less than their belief,"—from which concession it evidently appears, that no more can be done for the Roman Catholics, in respect of RELIGIOUS privilege, than has been done already.

The notion that the Roman Catholics, are unjustly deprived of their right to the privileges of the British Constitution, without adverting to its being established upon a Protestant basis, is so favourite a theme with you, that it forms the substratum of your whole argument, and I have been, on this account, the more desirous, with what success my readers must judge, of exposing its fallacy; because I feel convinced, that, could this single thread be subtracted, it would go nigh to affect the very existence of the finely spun, and well coloured web, which you have so ingeniously put together.—You avail yourself of the same reasoning in your Second Letter, where, having assumed for your premises, this right of the Roman Catholics, to the privileges of a Protestant Constitution, you very naturally arrive at the conclusion, that it is for their opponents “ to make out a case against the Roman Catholics, warranting “ exclusion”—while the fact is, that our Protestant Ancestors, having already made out this very case of exclusion, when they erected the Protestant Constitution, have saved us the trouble of any such work of supererogation, and have thrown on the Roman Catholics themselves, the onus probandi of shewing that their Church, and themselves, are not the same as they formerly were, and, therefore, that the British Constitution, should be made over to them again, for their accommodation. I apprehend that your major is wholly untenable, namely—that the Roman Catholics, ever had the right which you claim for them; and should it appear, that in the nature of things, they never could have possessed this right, your minor may be left to its fate. The right of Civil Protection, Religious Toleration, Personal Freedom; and indeed every other right, short of the right of exercising the Legislative and Executive functions, or bearing a part in the Administration of a Protestant Commonwealth, are the inalienable rights of our Roman Catholic countrymen; but that they ever possessed higher rights is a mere assumption, incapable of proof, and, consequently, all the reasoning for the restitution of those higher rights, which is founded on such an assumption, necessarily falls to the ground.—When, therefore, you contend,—

after supposing that the Roman Catholic has been violently and unnaturally deprived of the right which you claim for him—that it is only a right that *remains in abeyance*, and that the warmest advocates of restriction themselves, can only claim its thus continuing in abeyance, so long as they can prove its exercise to be incompatible with the safety of the State, the answer is obviously, as I have before stated, that the British Constitution, in its very nature and essence, is absolute and unbending exclusion, so far as concerns the admission of the Romanists, to share in its administration—It rejects therefore, in limine, the proffer of their services as a question of State; since they owe allegiance to another Master, and “no man can serve two Masters:” they are Members of another faith, and if they are not the greatest hypocrites, are bound to prefer and advance their own; and, in the same degree, to abhor and discountenance ours—the whole frame of our Ecclesiastical and Civil polity must, if they are honest men, be the object of their implacable, and incessant abhorrence; and a greater instance of impolicy can scarcely be imagined, than to place in situations of Trust and Power, the very persons who would have an obvious interest in the advancement, and success, of a completely opposite system to that in existence.

I remain, Sir,
Your most obedient Servant,

AMICUS PROTESTANS.

LETTER IV.

SIR,

Having, in my review of your Second Letter, endeavoured to shew, that the Roman Catholic has no pretence, as a matter of right, to share with Protestants in administering that CONSTITUTION, which was the purchase of Protestant blood, and is secured by Protestant laws; and, consequently, that he is deprived of no right, in being ex-

cluded from such a privilege, I observe further, that what he cannot claim as a matter of right, he can still less challenge as a matter of favour, to which he has entitled himself by his pacific tone—his penitential demeanour—or his improved spirit. The Romish Church, of which he forms an integral part, and from which he cannot be separated; even in theory, has never yet recalled a single denunciation against Protestants, nor disavowed a single opinion, which she has held and recorded, either as to their being out of the pale of salvation, or as to her right of employing the secular arm, for the purpose of punishing them for their contumacy, and disobedience; or, in other words, for exercising their inalienable right, of thinking for themselves, on the subject of Religion. That Church, on the contrary, still brands them with the name of Heretics, in all her official acts; expressly refuses to tolerate them; and has not, to this hour, by any public act whatever, condescended to meet the scruples, or remove the fears, of Protestants, by absolving those of her own Members, who are subjects of Foreign States, from the paramount claims of her own Supremacy; if it be said, that she only claims a *Spiritual* Supremacy, I answer, that the Head of that Church, has not so defined his own claims, nor has any Council, or Consistory, for him; much less, has he vouchsafed to inform us, wherein the distinction consists, between his Spiritual and Temporal authority; or to define, where the one terminates, and the other commences. But, further, the Head of the Roman Catholic Church, has, ever since the rejection of Mr. GRATTAN's Bill, for giving Seats in Parliament, to Roman Catholics, declared himself, in the face of our Protestant Nation, (which has mainly contributed to restore him to his power, by her councils, her money, and her arms), as hostile to our existence, and repose, as the most bigotted of his predecessors. He could not, indeed, from the want of means, equip a Naval Armada, or levy a Land Army, as they did, and he has not therefore appeared of late, on the theatre of Europe, in his character of a Temporal Prince; but as a Spiritual Sovereign, who wields the sceptre of his

ancient prerogative, over the consciences of all his subjects, wherever scattered, he has called into action, in the course of the last five years, some of the most powerful, and formidable resources, of his Anti-Christian Government, and has thus availed himself of the very indulgence, which has revived the benumbed powers of the Papacy, for the purpose of stinging the Protector, to whom he is principally indebted for his present Political existence. To England, indeed, as a Belligerent Nation, it is impossible but he should feel, as he has acknowledged, considerable obligation for her recent services; but to England, as a Protestant Nation, it was equally impossible, from the nature of his own system, that he could, upon principle, bear any favour, because, England has, in her Protestant character, done more, in the last three centuries, to injure and obstruct the cause of Superstition, Ignorance, and Error, than, perhaps, all the rest of the world put together. I have already adverted to the evidences of recent hostility, on the part of the Papacy, and shall only therefore remark, that abundant proofs of the present hostility of that indefatigable race of men, the Jesuits, have been multiplied upon the British public, ever since their arrival, as if for the purpose of convincing the incredulous, and awakening the indifferent; since the latest advices from Germany, Poland, Hungary, and other parts, all agree, in representing these agents of the Church of Rome, as active, beyond all former example, in opposing the several Bible Societies in those Nations, persecuting the friends and lovers of the Bible, and resisting, in every other way, the diffusion of spiritual light and truth, wherever they are found: so that, although no one, who was acquainted with their former history, could have entertained any doubt as to what would be their conduct on their revival, we are not left to the evidence of Ancient History alone, but have now the benefit of the most recent experience, and find, from innumerable facts, which have come to our own knowledge, and passed under our own observation, that the Jesuits, (like their brethren of the same Church, who are not Jesuits), are precisely the same

characters as they have ever been, and are resolved to convince Mr. WILBERFORCE, and their other Protestant Patrons, (in spite of their charitable hopes and assertions to the contrary), that the system of Popery, with which both Jesuits, and Catholics proper, are relatively connected, and by which they are mutually upheld, is unchanged, and unchangeable.

I have already noticed, the continued hostility of the Roman Catholic system, to the Protestant Faith, and to all who profess it, in the recent and virulent anathemas of the Pope, against all Bible Societies, and against all translations of the Bible, in the vernacular tongues, than which, nothing can be more revolting to those English Protestants, who retain any thing more of their Profession than its name, for I do not appeal to those who are mere nominal Protestants. It may answer the purpose of secular Politicians, such as Mr. CANNING, to resist the evidence arising from this remarkable fact of modern History, but so long as we have on record, the "striving unto blood," with which our old English Statesmen, Warriors, and Martyrs, resisted the attempt of Anti-Christian Rome, to refuse the Bible to the people, or (which was virtually the same thing), to keep it locked up in the original languages, so long it is impossible, but that the spiritual wickedness, and tyranny, of Popery, two centuries ago, must be identified, with the display of the same principles at the present moment; and, in spite of all the candour and liberality of Mr. WILBERFORCE, and his Friends, it must be manifest to the most superficial observer, that if the pure, and unadulterated Scriptures of Truth, were worth a struggle at the epochs of the Reformation, and the Revolution, the power, which would now deprive us of them, and prevent their circulation, ought to be resisted, by "all who profess, and call themselves Christians," or who would retain the name and character of Britons. The affront offered to England, by the Sovereign Pontiff, in this particular, is very remarkable. It may be true, that she is not named in the late Bulls, in express terms, but the application of every calumnious epithet to our own country, and the denunciation

of wrath against all those of her children, (not excepting Mr. WILBERFORCE himself), who presume to support the Bible Society, and to diffuse the Bible, are too plain to be mistaken, and "he that runs may read." When the Pope brands the Bible Society, as "a crafty device," he designates Englishmen, as devising craft.—When he stigmatizes Bible Societies, as "a pestilence," what is this, but to charge the land of Bible Societies, with being a pestilence in the Earth?—When he says, that these Societies are "a defilement of the Faith," he charges Englishmen with defiling the Faith.—When he denounces such Institutions, as "impious machinations," WE, are those Infidels, and Conspirators.—When he commands an Archbishop, to "expose the wickedness of this nefarious scheme," what is this, but to assert, that Englishmen are the agents of wickedness, and the ring-leaders of crime?—When he deplores, that an Enemy has sown "tares among the wheat," who is that Enemy, but Protestant England, one of whose accredited Agents, (and Mr. WILBERFORCE knows who), was more particularly meant to be designated in that very passage, and in what manner are the Scriptures of Eternal Truth designated, but as "*Tares*," that are only fit for the fire?—When the Pope declares, that "such scandals, and offences, in the Christian world, must be extirpated, at all events," what is this, but to vow interminable vengeance against Protestant England, and to resolve, that she is no longer fit to maintain her rank among Nations, because, she refuses to renounce her ancient heresy of venerating, and circulating, the Sacred Scriptures? I have also shewn that Popery *is*, what Popery *was*, from the very remarkable declaration, of the Catholic Bishops of the Netherlands, against the toleration of Protestants, issued so recently, as the 28th of July, 1815, which was two years after Mr. GRATTAN attempted to obtain Seats in the British Parliament for Roman Catholics, an object, in which Mr. WILBERFORCE then supported him, as he has more recently done, in the face of this intolerant declaration, as well as of all the other evidence which has occurred, since the British

Parliament rejected Mr. GRATTAN's Bill. On this important act of the Romish Hierarchy, I do not now enlarge, because it has been noticed before; but, it cannot be sufficiently impressed upon Protestants, that it is not more than three years since, that the Roman Catholic Prelacy of the Netherlands declared, that their Church was solemnly, and irrevocably, pledged to intolerance, and threatened their King with rebellion, if he should persist in affording toleration to his Protestant subjects. The last, though not the least, of the overwhelming evidences, which have recently appeared against a Religion of darkness and crime, is the revival of the Inquisition, in this period of the world's age—an act, by which it should appear, that the Head of a corrupt Church, is determined, most effectually, to confute, and falsify, the absurd allegations of certain Protestants—that Popery is no longer the evil genius, which their Forefathers considered it, but may now be regarded as a gentle, harmless, and pacific thing, having no design upon freedom of conscience, and no objection to the liberty of the subject. But this is not all, for the conduct of the Romish Priesthood, throughout Ireland, in instigating the Rebellion of 1798, and perpetuating the same bitter and rancorous spirit, against every thing British, and every thing Protestant,—their determined opposition to Education, and to the dispersion of the Holy Scriptures—their impositions on their own deluded flocks, of painful austerities, distant pilgrimages, and pecuniary penalties—their bigotted support of the grossest corruptions of Popery, by which any profit is to be obtained for themselves, more especially, the Masses, for praying Souls out of Purgatory, into which, if the Bible be true, no Soul ever yet entered, and from which, no Soul can therefore be delivered, much less by a Priest, who is paid for the purpose—all these, and other acts of the like nature, establish the impolicy of investing such agents, with the power of effecting mischief on a larger scale, because they refute the assertions of their invariable loyalty, and attachment to the laws. So long as Ireland continues an essential part of the United Kingdom, so long the crimes and

follies of Irish Papists, must be injurious to a Protestant Empire, and *pari ratione*, the danger to the Kingdom at large will be equally great, from conceding Political power to the Roman Catholics, although the worst specimens of those perturbed spirits, may not, perhaps, be found in England proper. I hope, therefore, that from the double consideration of Popery on the Continent, and in Ireland, being what it ever has been, enough will already have been said, to disprove the assertion, that, as no just cause now exists, for refusing the Claims, Protestants, are bound to renounce their ancient line of policy.

It is indeed said that the Roman Catholic is willing that every guarantee, not subversive of his Religion, should be given to the State, against the danger of Foreign influence.—With regard to the general question of guarantees and securities, it is next to impossible that he who knows any thing of the secular policy of the Romish Religion, and who has ever compared Ancient, with Modern History, can be satisfied with any amount of security, which the Professors of such a Faith could offer to Protestants.—Little else is indeed proposed than a guarantee against Foreign influence, which is but one out of a variety of dangers, which the Members of a Protestant Church and State must anticipate from the concession of the Claims. In proof of the indisposition entertained by the Romish Church, to yield a single inch of ground, in the way of securities or indemnities, we need only to consider the conduct of the Roman Catholics themselves on the subject of the Veto, and of Domestic Nomination, (as it was called), one of which, if granted, would have been about as useful to Protestants as the other, because both were alike ideal and imaginary securities, and would never have afforded any adequate protection for a single year. The power of the Church of Rome is seen in nothing more forcibly than in the whole question of the Veto.—The Roman Catholic Laity (“good easy men full surely”), would willingly have conceded the Veto to those Political Protestants, who thought it of any use; but the Church soon interposed, and made them retract their pledge. The.

Laity (including the ENGLISH ROMAN CATHOLICS), although desirous of conceding the Veto, (useless as in fact it would have been to a Protestant State), were resolutely told, by a Power, over which they had no controul, and which they dared not disobey, that the Protestant King of England, should not be permitted to object to the appointment of a Roman Catholic Bishop, under any circumstances. The refusal of the Veto then, although the thing in itself, was a matter of little consequence, betrayed a line of policy on the part of the Romish Church, which displayed to demonstration, the continuance of her arrogant pretensions, and dangerous principles. Mr. WILBERFORCE might have spared himself the trouble of advocating Mr. GRATTAN'S Memorable Bill of 1813, if he could have anticipated the determined opposition of the Romish Church, to all his mistaken zeal in the service of men who would not be helped by any thing short of the destruction of the Protestant Constitution, in Church and State. Little indeed did he imagine that while he was working night and day, to perform an impossibility, that is, to satisfy his Roman Catholic friends, without giving up the Protestant Constitution, that those very friends would have been so ungrateful, as to decline swallowing the nostrum which he had prepared for them, as altogether unsuited to their case.* It affords, however, great matter of surprise, that, after the knowledge of this fact, and after the sub-

* The following is a Copy of the Resolution of the Roman Catholic Hierarchy of Ireland, objecting to the Bill then pending in Parliament for the Roman Catholics, and supported by Mr. WILBERFORCE, and which Bill, when so objected to, contained in it the Clause for giving Seats in Parliament to Roman Catholics, upon the subsequent loss of which Clause, the friends of the Bill abandoned it altogether, as useless to their purpose.

“ At a General Meeting of the Roman Catholic Prelates, of Ireland, held this day, 27th May, 1813.—The Most Rev. Rd. O'Reilley, D. D. President,

“ Resolved unanimously, That having seriously examined the Copy of a Bill, now in progress through Parliament, purporting to provide

sequent conduct of the Court of Rome; that excellent Man should be still found fighting in the same ranks, and in spite of Modern experience, as well as in defiance of Ancient record, should still imagine that he can satisfy the Church of Rome, by any measure short of the unconditional surrender of the Church of England.

We next find a specimen of the *argumentum ad misericordiam*, for you dwell with all the pomp of rhetoric, and almost all the colouring of poetry, on the "pain," and "suffering," "the persecution," and "degradation," of "Five Millions," of our "Fellow Citizens, relatively degraded in the scale of social existence," and Mr. PEEL, (of all men in the world) is introduced as "candidly acknowledging the greatness of this evil, and the affliction which he felt at being obliged to tolerate it, as a refuge from what he deemed an evil greater still." All this is pathetically pronounced to be "a great social evil," and "a sore evil under the sun," videlicet, that these same five millions † of Catholics, should consider themselves persecuted, on account of their "Religion," for even you, Sir, do not, in this place, go the length of de-

"for the removal of the Civil and Military Disqualifications, under which His Majesty's Roman Catholic Subjects labour; we feel ourselves bound to declare, that the Ecclesiastical Clauses, or Securities therein contained, are utterly incompatible with the discipline of the Roman Catholic Church, and with the free exercise of our Religion."

"Resolved unanimously, That without incurring the heavy guilt of schism, we cannot accede to such Regulations, nor can we dissemble our dismay and consternation, at the consequences which such Regulations, if enforced, must necessarily produce."

(Signed)

"RICHARD O'REILLY, President."

† This argument, drawn from NUMBERS, reminds us of the Arithmetical Logic of another Reasoner, who shall be nameless, but who is represented by MILTON, as having charged the faithful ABDIEL, with daring to

"oppose

"A third part of the Gods in Synod met

"Their Deities to assert, who while they feel

"Vigour divine within them, can allow

"Omnipotence to none."———

claring that they *are* persecuted, although you mysteriously announce that you "have an opinion on that point," and you finally declare, that the question of persecution remains the same, "whether physical pain is inflicted by means of a thumb-screw, or mental pain, by means of degradation from rank." Whether this figure of the thumb-screw, may have been suggested by the convincing little instruments of that name still remaining in the Tower, as part of the spoil of the invincible Armada, I am not aware; but inasmuch as it is not so well ascertained, that this or any other Protestant Nation, ever meant to employ the argument of the thumb-screw against the Roman Catholics, as it is that the Roman Catholics did actually intend to make use of it against the Protestants, I cannot but regard the allusion, as rather infelicitous on the part of an advocate for the Romish Claims. I know not indeed, whether I should have credit with you, for the sincerity of any professions I might make in reference to any of my Brethren in affliction, whether tortured by the thumb-screw of physical pain, or writhing under the mental anguish of heraldic degradation: I should, otherwise, put in my claim, as one who, in his character of a Man, was probably not unmindful of the rights of suffering humanity in any quarter of the Globe, and in answer to any charges or inuendoes of illiberality, hard-heartedness, and apathy, might perhaps exclaim, "*Non adeo obtusa gestamus pectora*,"—without however knowing, with certainty, how far you will give me credit for my professions of regard, for our more distant Brethren, I will still venture to *prefer* my claim to the possession of some portion of that charity which begins at home, and to express a hope that, however deficient you may consider me, in my affection for the Antipodes, you will believe that I can feel strongly—perhaps not censurably—for those of my own Religion, and my own blood. It was once said of a celebrated French Philanthropist, that he loved the Tartars so ardently, that he deemed himself dispensed, on that account, from loving his Neighbour; and it was once also said of the French in general, that they "were friends of

“ their kind, and foes of their kindred.” It is possible to feel very strongly, or to fancy that we do so, for Irish Roman Catholics, Political Fortune Hunters, and Religious Incendiaries, till our morbid sensibility for their imaginary misfortunes, and our quixotic resentment for their ideal wrongs, may well nigh absorb, and annihilate, all proper feeling for the interests of our “ own people, and our Father’s house.” We are creatures of limited capacities, and powers, and it behoves us to beware, while we are for taking the whole world into our comprehensive embrace, that we do not let fall some of the simplest and most obvious duties of our flesh and kindred.—We live in an age of extensive liberality, and liberality is doubtless an estimable thing, but there is also such a spurious imitation of it as latitudinarianism, which, like the unintelligible “ *cetera*” of certain authors, by including every thing, takes in nothing.—“ Non omnia possumus omnes.”—We cannot serve two Masters—we cannot at once patronize and aid the Church of England, and the Church of Rome—the cause of darkness, and of light.—The word of God, as well as the conditions and exigencies of our nature, compel us to take our choice between the two—and, therefore, with the most unfeigned attachment to the cause of liberty and charity all over the world, I cannot forget that I have some paramount obligations and primary duties at home. I cannot but remember with all due respect for the number “ Five,” that there are a few more Millions of PROTESTANTS, and I do not see how, without first voting all History a fable, we can properly suffer our sensitive feelings to be so far excited, touching the fanciful wrongs of the professors of another faith, as to overlook the undoubted rights of our Brethren, our Fellow worshippers, our Relatives, and our Friends, among the Protestants.

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

AMICUS PROTESTANS.

LETTER V.

SIR,

Having established, to your entire satisfaction, in your Second Letter, that "the common suffering" of Priest and People, has united, and now binds them, in the strongest bonds; and that all our legislation, has been hitherto impolitic, because, its great tendency has been, to confirm this supposed connection of mutual misery: you thence argue, that the intended Acts of Parliament for their relief, will disunite these two bodies, now "grappled together, with hooks of steel,"—will cause them to "obey opposite tendencies,"—and, ultimately, to "diverge." All this, Sir, may look very well upon paper, and may even sound well in a debate upon "Catholic Emancipation," but, unless you are prepared to go the whole length, of surrendering the Ecclesiastical Assendancy to the Roman Catholics, I roundly deny, that any Political relief, which you may design, will loose these grappling irons, either in England, or Ireland; or administer satisfaction, either to the Romish Priesthood, or to that part of the Romish Laity which cares for its own Religion. Both Priests and People, Sir, be assured, love their own Religious Creed, at least as much you love yours; and, with an accession of Political power, and privilege, neither party will be disposed to brook the denial of that, which lies nearest their hearts, as good Catholics, than any amount of civil, or social advantage, which kind-hearted Protestants, in their abundant candour, and wisdom, may be willing to concede. There will still remain a bond for the mutual union of the Romish Clergy, and Laity, in their common Faith, quite as strong as any which you propose to dissolve; and, until you can prove, that Religious suffering, is as easy of endurance, as Political suffering, you will find, that no ground will have been gained by all the concessions which you so charitably meditate. The Romish Clergy, and Laity, will never cease to ask, while any thing, and

especially, while the main thing, remains to be granted, nor will you gain any thing for your argument, by alledging, that they will ask in vain, and that Protestants will, with one voice, refuse them the ascendancy in matters of Religion; for if it shall once appear, that all the expedients for peace, and harmony, at whose shrine we are expected to sacrifice so much, are unlikely to accomplish your object, and will still leave the same morbid appetite, after an unattained good, to rankle in the minds of the Roman Catholics; the Protestant Church, and Cause, will, in that case, be left in a far worse condition, than they are in at present, since they will have gained just nothing, towards the desiderata of union, and concord, but will have lost, by the proposed measures, those Political safeguards, and fences, with which our Protestant Constitution, and our Protestant Laws, now gird, and invest, the interests of the Church, and the State.—The advantage of this experiment must, therefore, be at best but problematical, while its evils, are palpable, and certain.

You tell us, indeed, in reference to all future danger, that you have, in vain, endeavoured to discover it, and that its existence, is highly improbable; and, in illustration of your opinion, (for I presume, that even you, Sir, would be unwilling to call it *proof*), that “a Catholic Privy Counsellor, would, probably, be a perfectly harmless person,” you observe, that the public would neither know, nor regard, whether he were a Catholic or not; an observation, upon which, I may, perhaps, be excused, for declining to take up the time of our readers, by offering any formal comment. For other reasons, than because the public would give themselves no concern about the matter, you see nothing to fear, from Roman Catholic Judges, and Roman Catholic Members of Parliament, and these reasons are,—1st, because the Romish Judges must decide according to law, and because, British Juries would controul them, if they did not, as if Protestant Laws, and Protestant Juries, were likely long to survive the changes in question!—and, 2ndly,

because Catholic Members of Parliament, would be surrounded by an immense Protestant majority,—an expectation, which I propose hereafter, to shew, is improbable, and delusive.

In concluding your Second Letter, on which I should apologise for having dwelt so long, you condemn the system of statutory restrictions, and penal laws, as mean and feeble instruments for the support of the Protestant Cause, and you instance LUTHER, and his associates, as disdaining such carnal means, and likely to blush for their professed followers, if they could witness our folly. Now, Sir, it does so happen, that a more unlucky example than that of LUTHER, could hardly have been suggested to you, by your evil genius.—Not only did LUTHER, expressly deny the right of the Civil Magistrate, to encourage, and foster, the profession of the Romish Faith, (as you now call upon the Parliament, and the Government, to do), but he went much farther, for he contended, that it was the duty of the Civil Magistrate, (and herein, of the legislative, as well as the executive, power), to correct such abuses of true Religion, as Popery presents. MARTIN LUTHER, (says no less a man than PUFFENDORF, in his “Spiritual Monarchy of Rome”), not only inveighed against the errors, and abuses, which had crept into the Church, and the scandalous lives of the Monks, and Priests, but, “he maintained, that it was *a duty incumbent upon the Civil Magistrate, to abolish these abuses.*” It is not therefore true, that he trusted to the powers of his own argument, nor even to the force of Divine Truth itself, and, although I am far from thinking that LUTHER was justified, in calling for the interference of the Magistrate, I still think it right to adduce this fact, in order to shew how far the great Champion of Protestantism was from holding that any favour, or countenance, should be afforded by the Civil Magistrate, to gross, and notorious Error; and, how little they are likely to understand the genius, either of Popery or Protestantism, who, in our days, can deliberately

advise, and advocate, the concession of enlarged authority, and influence, to a false, and corrupt Religion.

Of a similar opinion with the great Head of the Protestant Cause, were the principal Divines of a former age, in England. In an Address to the Magistrates of London, dated 11th September, 1657, now lying before me, signed, (among others), by no meaner men, than MATTHEW POLE, and EDMUND CALAMY, I find the following striking paragraph: "We hear, and fear it is too true, that Priests, and Jesuits, (those Romish Locusts), do swarm amongst us, in the City, and Suburbs: we beseech you, *for the sake of Jesus Christ, and for love to the Gospel*, to put forth your power, to the utmost, for discovering, and suppressing of them." I ask any modern Divines of our time, who, either openly favour the grant of power to Popery, or, who are, at best, content to let things take their course, without remonstrance, or appeal, on their parts, to consider the solemn, and deliberate judgment, of those giants in Theology, and Literature, who thus entered their protest against the corruptions which hazarded the ruin of Souls, and the safety of the Nation. Let it even be granted, in this, as in the other case, that it was a mistaken zeal, which sought the intervention of the Civil power, for suppressing a Religion of falsehood; but, surely, this holy ardour in the cause of truth, was more excusable than a treacherous indifference to its interests, and must, at all events, be admitted to stand at the farthest possible distance, from the spurious charity, and misguided liberality, which would lead us to set up Popery, instead of pulling it down, and induce us, to surrender the ensigns of authority, into the hands of the Members of a corrupt creed, to be employed, in all probability, against ourselves. I only again desire in conclusion, that I may not be understood, as intending to advocate the right, or the policy, of such an interference with Religion, by the Civil Magistrate, as shall affect the undoubted privilege of every one, to worship God, according to the dictates of his conscience. I am only desirous of setting you right, when you

present LUTHER, as resting exclusively upon argument, and disclaiming all appeal to authority. Whether LUTHER, POLE, CALAMY, LOCKE, and others, may have been justified, in the views they have entertained on this subject, is a question, upon which, however I may disagree with them in opinion, I am not obliged to decide; but, I think, I have abundantly shewn, that, at all events, YOU can derive no support from their opinions, on this head, and this is all that appears necessary to my present argument.

Of the authorities against the *Toleration* of Papists, that of Mr. LOCKE appears of so much importance, that I shall extract it, as forming a fit conclusion for this Letter, although subject, of course, to the qualifying observations, which I have just made upon such a view of the subject. "Another
" more secret evil, but more dangerous to the Commonwealth,
" is when men arrogate to themselves, and to those of their
" own sect, some peculiar prerogative, covered over with a
" specious show of deceitful words, but in effect opposite to
" the Civil Rights of the Community. For example: We cannot
" find any sect that teaches expressly and openly, that
" men are not obliged to keep their promise; that Princes
" may be dethroned by those that differ from them in Religion;
" or that the dominion of all things belongs only to themselves.
" For these things, proposed thus nakedly and plainly, would soon draw on them the eye and hand of the Magistrate, and awaken all the care of the Commonwealth, to a watchfulness against the spreading of so dangerous an evil. But, nevertheless, we find those that say
" the same things in other words. What else do THEY mean,
" who teach that, 'faith is not to be kept with heretics?'
" Their meaning, forsooth, is, that the privilege of breaking
" faith belongs to themselves: for they declare all that are
" not of their Communion to be Heretics, or, at least, may
" declare them so whenever they think fit. What can be the
" meaning of their asserting that 'Kings excommunicated
" forfeit their Crowns and Kingdoms,' It is evident that they
" thereby arrogate to themselves, the power of deposing

“ Kings : because they challenge the power of Excommuni-
 “ cation as the peculiar right of their Hierarchy. ‘ That do-
 “ minion is founded in grace,’ is also an assertion, by which
 “ those that maintain it, do plainly lay claim to the posses-
 “ sion of all things. For they are not so wanting to them-
 “ selves as not to believe, or at least, as not to profess,
 “ themselves to be the truly pious and faithful. *These there-*
 “ *fore, and the like, who attribute to the Faithful, Religious,*
 “ *and Orthodox, that is, in plain terms, to themselves, any pe-*
 “ *culiar privilege or power above other mortals, in civil con-*
 “ *cernments ; or who, upon pretence of Religion, do challenge*
 “ *any manner of authority over such as are not associated with*
 “ *them in the Ecclesiastical Communion ; I say THESE HAVE*
 “ *NO RIGHT TO BE TOLERATED BY THE MAGISTRATE ; as*
 “ *neither those that will not own, and teach, the duty of tolera-*
 “ *ting all men in matters of mere Religion. For what do all*
 “ *these, and the like doctrines signify, but that they may, and*
 “ *are ready upon any occasion, to, seize the Government, and*
 “ *possess themselves of the Estates and Fortunes of their fellow-*
 “ *subjects ; and, that they only ask leave to be tolerated by the*
 “ *Magistrates so long, until they find themselves strong enough*
 “ *to effect it ? That Church can have no right to be tolerated*
 “ *by the Magistrate, which is constituted upon such a bottom,*
 “ *that all those who enter into it, do thereby, ipso facto, deliver*
 “ *themselves up to the protection and service of another Prince.*
 “ *For by this means, the Magistrate would give way to the settling*
 “ *of a Foreign Jurisdiction in his own Country, and suffer his*
 “ *own people to be listed, as it were, for Soldiers against his*
 “ *own Government. Nor does the frivolous and fallacious dis-*
 “ *tinction between the Court and the Church” [of Rome] “ af-*
 “ *ford any remedy to this inconvenience ; especially when both*
 “ *the one and the other are equally subject to the absolute au-*
 “ *thority of the same person, who has not only power to per-*
 “ *suaude the Members of his Church to whatsoever he lists, ei-*
 “ *ther as purely Religious, or as in order thereunto ; but can*
 “ *also enjoin it them on pain of eternal fire. As for other*
 “ *practical opinions, though not absolutely free from all error,*

yet if they do not tend to establish domination over others,
 " or civil impunity to the Church in which they are taught,
 " there can be no reason why they should not be tolerated."—
 LOCKE on Toleration—Works, vol. 6. p. 45. Edit. London,
 1801.

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient humble Servant,

AMICUS PROTESTANS.

LETTER VI.

SIR,

Having in your Second Letter, professedly answered my Ninth Letter alone, you now in a Third Letter, exercising as before, the privilege of answering just so much as you think proper, pass over all notice of my Tenth Letter, and reply to my Eleventh alone! Of this singular mode of conducting a Correspondence I make no complaints, and only deem it necessary to advert to the fact of so many of my Letters to Mr. WILBERFORCE, having received no reply whatever, lest any persons who may not have attended to the entire series, should erroneously imagine, that my Letters have been regularly answered. They have been answered only in part; and in what manner such partial examination has been executed, it will be for the Public alone to decide.

You open your Third Letter, by congratulating the Public on " the facilities which they at present enjoy for arriving at " a wise and comprehensive opinion;" and you hail, " the " omission of those appeals to the passions of the multitude, which have equally reflected disgrace on both parties, on some former occasions." I sincerely agree with you that " a meek and quiet spirit," in the conduct of this, or any other controversy, is " in the sight of God, of great price," and, therefore, cannot be too highly esteemed in the eye of Man, and I admit that it is difficult to arrive at Truth, amidst the conflict of tumultuous passions. I am willing to

believe also, that you may intend no more than meets the ear, by this panegyric on the improved spirit of the age; and, with this qualification, I readily concur in it, and desire, in the conduct of this question, to attain the highest liberality of sentiment, which is consistent with the paramount interests of Truth. It cannot, however, Sir, have escaped your observation, that the advocates of the Roman Catholic Claims, have been, of late, both in Parliament, and elsewhere, remarkably lavish of their compliments on the liberality of the age, and have eulogised the charity and candour of Protestants, too often at the expence of their integrity, and consistency. It is impossible to misunderstand these appeals, or their object. To such persons, the apathy, and indifference of many, who call themselves Protestants, affords the surest pledge of their own success, in reference to the Roman Catholic Claims; and, it is therefore, no wonder if they are loud in their commendation of those qualities in their opponents, which must, most effectually, subserve their own ends. You, Sir, however, need not be reminded that, "it is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing," that a reckless indifference to Truth, is any thing else than true Charity, and that a man may sometimes (like the Apostle of old), "speak forth the words of Truth and Soberness," even when he may be esteemed no better than "mad," by those whose prejudices may refuse the assent which their judgments concede. It is not every species of controversial ardour, which is to be censured as intemperance and enthusiasm. "God loves," (says BISHOP HALL), "this heat of zeal in all the carriages of his servants; and if it transports us too far, he pardoneth the errors of our fervency, rather than the indifferences of lukewarmness." In reference to this particular point it is, that no less a man than LORD BACON, has observed, "Earnestness must not hastily be condemned, for men cannot contend coldly, and without affection, about things which they hold dear and precious: a politic man may write from his brain, without touch and sense of his heart, as in a speculation that pertaineth not unto him; but a

"feeling Christian will express in his words, & character of "zeal and love." There are doubtless, many arguments for the Protestant Cause, detailed in Fox's Martyrology, which, would be deemed illiberal in our polished age, as there are also many acts of Protestant Heroism, there recorded, which would be regarded as so much extravagance, if not insanity, by some cold and prudent calculators of our own day. Before, therefore, we can go all lengths with those who are loudest in their applause of the candour of Protestants, in the present times, we shall do well to take the measure of their own Protestantism; and to ascertain, whether their strong attachment to the Roman Catholic Claims, may not have warped and distorted their judgment to an extent, perhaps, unsuspected even by themselves. It certainly is an old-fashioned thing to hate Popery, as the great corruption of all vital Religion, but it is not always that new opinions, any more than new fashions, are the best; nor must we imagine that the warmth of feeling, or the strength of expression, into which some of the holiest and wisest men have been carried, when treating of the Church of Rome, her agents, or her advocates, are to be summarily classed with the illiberality of the narrow minded, or the bigotry of the devotee. "On n'a pas pris la Bastille," (says a French Proverb), "avec de la limonade," and LUTHER, must be excused for having said some coarse things, and done some strong things, when he was attacking the abominations, and absurdities, of what your ancient namesake, the real MELANCTHON, was wont to call "the old Religion," a lenient designation of Popery, Sir, to which for aught I know, you may award your approbation, and of which healing epithet it is certain that Mr. CANNING, thought sufficiently well, to give it a niche in his last Speech for the Romish Claims.

You proceed to enquire what dangers are to be apprehended from Catholic Emancipation, and you immediately answer your own question, by affirming that, "politically speaking, there is no danger," which is undoubtedly a convenient mode of anticipating an unfavourable reply; you do not, however,

venture to assert that, “*Religiously*” speaking, there is no danger, and your silence on this head leaves untouched, and unrefuted, a considerable portion of my reasoning in reference to future danger; since you must be well aware that the danger from that source (although by no means to the exclusion of political danger), is most insisted on, through the whole of my argument; you do indeed advert to what you call “the Religious part of the subject;” but far from answering my observations on the probable consequences of giving power and influence to Popery; you chuse to designate our present adherence to the Religious, and Civil Constitution, of our Protestant Ancestors, as an attack upon the doctrines of the Church of Rome, and from such premises, you argue that we are at present “punishing our Catholic Brother for his speculative tenets, and imitating the absurdity and criminality of Mahomet, by seeking to extend Protestantism by Act of Parliament,” thus characterizing our just and necessary defence of the Protestant Church and State, as “adopting the worst parts of the system of the Church of Rome, its assumption, and its intolerance!”

As I shall have further occasion to shew that, thus to describe our adherence to our ancient British system of Legislation and Government, as absolute persecution, is a most unjust and untenable charge, I merely content myself with noticing it in the present instance, and advert to another point of considerable importance. You state that “the one specific form of apprehended danger, into which all the rest which have been conjured up, ultimately resolve themselves, is the *enormous chimera* of the Catholics, obtaining a majority in the House of Commons,” and you designate this topic of alarm “in the meridian of England,” “in a nation of Protestants,” “in the presence of an educated, active, and endowed Clergy, having the vantage grounds of possession,” “in a Country of Bible Societies, and in spite of a Free Press, as so exceedingly feeble an argument,” that you say, you “fairly pitied Mr. PEEL, when he alluded to it,” after which you affirm that “the argument must be

“felt to be feeble by AMICUS PROTESTANS himself.” Now, Sir, it really does so happen, that I have no such feeling for Mr. PEEL’s argument, and consequently cannot feel so tenderly as you do for its Author. I believe him, on the contrary, to be strictly and demonstrably correct, not in having asserted (which he never did), that the Roman Catholics were likely to become a numerical majority in the House of Commons (although Mr. PEEL, might possibly have had his opinion upon that point), but in deprecating their admission to Legislative Rights, on account of the inevitable mischief and injury which he considered must follow their introduction to the Seats of Legislature, and for which it is perhaps by no means necessary that they should be able to reckon an absolute majority of their own Members, over those professing Protestantism. That their numbers must be considerable and formidable, cannot be doubted when the following reasons shall be considered. Ireland sends a hundred Members to the House of Commons. The Roman Catholics boast that their number there is to that of Protestants, as five to one, but supposing it only four to one, and taking this as reasonable data by which to calculate the number of Representatives, the Roman Catholics will return eighty of the hundred, to the first Parliament which may meet after they shall be rendered eligible to Seats, since it cannot be doubted that they will elect none but men of their own Faith. We cannot be surprised that many of the Irish Members are advocates of what is called “Emancipation,” for their election has depended upon their declaring themselves on that side; but if they were not very short-sighted, they might discern that the Parliament which shall concede what is demanded with so much clamour, will be the last Parliament in which they are likely to sit. In vain would they apply to the people, or to the Priests, to be returned again, unless they should become Roman Catholics, for no Roman Catholic would vote for a Protestant, if there remained a qualified Roman Catholic in the three kingdoms. If Ireland should not contain a sufficient number of persons so qualified, there are great plenty to be found among the sons of Popish

Peers, and the inferior gentry of the same communion in England and Scotland, who would be as eligible to be returned for Ireland as if they belonged to that kingdom.

The probability then is, that at least three-fourths of the Irish Members will be Roman Catholics, so soon as the eligibility of that Profession shall be pronounced ; but let it, for the sake of argument, be taken at a much less proportion, and then let us turn our eyes to England proper. It is sufficiently notorious that there are, and probably always will be, other ways of entering the House of Commons than by Popular Election. I am not so much objecting to such a condition of things, as simply stating the existence of a fact which no man in his senses will deny. There is such a thing for instance as *Patrician influence*, which in the case of Roman Catholic Patrons, can of course be exercised only in favour of Roman Catholics, and in the case of many—perhaps a majority of—Protestant Patrons, will operate in favour of Roman Catholic nominees, from absolute indifference to any distinction existing between the Religion of Protestantism, and the Religion of Popery. We know where it is written “ Gallio cared for none of these things,” and are there no Gallio’s in England ? There is also such a thing as *Government Influence*, a principle of action which in the nature of things must probably operate more or less while Government itself shall exist ; but who can imagine that when a useful instrument of a ruling Administration shall present himself, it will be any objection to those Members of the Government who shall have brought in the Roman Catholics, that the Individual about to be seated in Parliament happens to be a Roman Catholic. The last question, assuredly, that LORD HARROWBY, Mr. CANNING, or LORD CASTLE-REAGH could ask, upon their own avowed principles, would be, whether the man were a Roman Catholic, or a Protestant, provided it should only appear that his talents might be available for the purposes of the State. It will indeed be the height of injustice for any Member of the Government, to object to the introduction into Parliament of a Roman Catholic, as such, after the united sense of the Legislature shall have

thrown open every avenue of admission to the Roman Catholics. Here, then, would be an unfailing chance of supply, by which the House of Commons as well as various offices of Executive Trust, would, from time to time, be fed with Roman Catholics, especially when the aristocratical bias, and tory sentiments, indissolubly connected with the Romish system, so clearly indicate the Members of that Church, as among the most fitting instruments for the confidence of any regular and Ancient Government.

In addition to Patrician and Government Influence, there is also a species of influence, the nature of which will be quite as intelligible, without much enlargement, as either of the other, to every one who is, in any degree, conversant with men and things; I am as little disposed to quarrel with this, as with other modes of introduction into the same interior; but no one can doubt that there are certain ways and means, by which any Roman Catholic Nobleman, or Gentleman, who shall chuse to see his Son, or his Friend in Parliament, can accomplish his object; and will any man who is acquainted with the means possessed by the Roman Catholic body, of arriving at the same end, imagine, for a moment, that after having carried the question of their friends eligibility to Seats in the House of Commons, they will, by any "Self-denying ordinance," omit to avail themselves of the privilege? Let this part of my argument be seriously considered, and let him who talks, or writes, on this subject, for any higher end than Victory, lay his hand on his heart, and honestly answer whether, from the necessary preponderance of wealth, a considerable portion of influence must not be brought into action in favour of the Roman Catholics, independently of all other sources of supply whatever.

In enumerating these several ways of elevating Roman Catholics, into Legislators, so soon as their eligibility shall have been once determined, I wish to be understood, as by no means of opinion, that the principle of a Popular Election, to which I first adverted, would help us much, in keeping the Roman Catholics out of the House of Commons. So far from it, I apprehend, with great submission to the general

body, (or as SPENSER, has somewhat unceremoniously called them, "the rascal many)," that, THE MOB, whether of Westminster, Southwark, or elsewhere, would be quite as little likely to discriminate, between a good and a bad Religion, as their betters, and that with the utter indifference, not to say the profound ignorance, which reigns upon the question of Religion, in any large and tumultuous assemblage of the people, in these times of apathy, a Roman Catholic Candidate, even in this Protestant country, would stand quite as good, if not a better, chance of success, than a Protestant himself.

With these combined causes, then, in operation, who will venture to deny, the strong probability, that, before many years shall have passed over our heads, we may see a considerable proportion of the National Representatives, Roman Catholics? You will have advanced no nearer to your object, if you could even prove, that, for some time to come, the numerical majority of Members, will be Protestants, in their Religious profession; for, the balance, in favour of the Protestants, in point of *numbers*, will soon be more than counterbalanced, by the superior activity, intrigue, and vigilance, of the formidable minority of Roman Catholics, who will be opposed to them; the successful working of all which machinery, will afford the best encouragement to the Roman Catholics themselves, that they will not always be doomed to toil in a minority. Most of those persons, who are acquainted with the distinctive characters of the two Religions, will, naturally, anticipate, of our new Senators, that a hearty earnestness in their own cause, and an ardent zeal for the enlargement and enrichment of what they believe to be the only true Church on earth, will characterize their Parliamentary exertions, and be likely, eventually, to triumph over the inactivity, security, and apathy, of their Protestant colleagues. No one too, who is acquainted with the mighty and overwhelming influence of the Romish Hierarchy, over the consciences and affections of its Lay, as well as Spiritual, Members, can doubt the power of such a powerful principle

of action, in reference to the unremitting efforts which will then be made, to rebuild the falling Temple of Popery, out of the old materials of the Protestant Church.

I have, however, as yet adverted, but to one branch of the Legislature.—With regard to THE HOUSE OF LORDS, the Popish Peers, both in England and Ireland, will, of course, immediately take their seats; and when the Church of England can at the present moment, only boast of a majority of THIRTY NINE Peers, against the late preposterous Emancipation Bill, of whom, TWENTY SIX were Bishops, (and therefore voted, as may be supposed, more or less professionally), leaving only a majority of THIRTEEN Lay Lords, opposed to the Romish Claims; what must we not expect, when a fresh accession of Temporal Peers shall be thrown in upon us, the whole of whom will be open, and avowed, Roman Catholics?

I am even willing, for the sake of the argument, to suppose, that these new “legislative attorneys,” for the Church of Rome, (as SIR CHARLES WOLSELEY would call them), will not find their course entirely unobstructed, in either House of Parliament, and will not advance to their object, without considerable opposition, and (if you will), without a serious struggle; nay, in order to suppose the worst against my own argument, I will even for a moment imagine, that the Protestant Church and Cause, may come off conquerors at last, and that Popery will never obtain a final ascendancy in this land of Bible Societies, Orthodox Clergymen, and a Free Press—but, is it wise to provoke so much dissention and division, as your scheme proposes, when we have the choice of avoiding them? Is it politic, to necessitate by this gratuitous experiment, such a clashing of interests, and such a conflict of parties, with, perhaps, even an appeal to the sword itself, when we may just as easily resolve against perpetrating this act of Political suicide? Have we not, to use your own words, “the vantage ground of possession?”—and can we not, to employ a more homely adage, “let well alone?” Whoever else may be benefited by our fool-hardi-

ness, I challenge you to prove, that **WE** can be gainers by it, either as Protestants, as Churchmen, or as Britons? The martyrdoms of bloody Queen Mary, (for so I take leave to call her), were so far from injuring the true Church of Christ, that no true Protestant doubts they benefited it; but who would, on that account, desire to see a Popish Queen again on the Throne, in order that we may dislodge her by another Reformation; or a Popish King, because he may perchance be unshipped, (as JAMES 2nd, was), by another Revolution? Upon the modern scheme of liberality, all the bloodshed of one of these Reigns, and all the terror of the other, are to go for nothing; and such epochs of our History are to be stoically contemplated by Protestant Christians as not very terrible, because, forsooth, we have still so much Protestantism left, that whatever may be the temporary disadvantages of concession, we may still exercise our ancient prerogatives, and powers, by a fortunate resumption of them at some time or other, though it be not very clear when, or how—a theory not much unlike the fortuitous concourse of atoms, which is supposed by some Philosophers to have produced the world, or the felicitous restitution of all things, which is imagined by some Religionists as likely to set every thing to rights, in the long run.

With regard to the highest branch of the Legislature—it becoms me to touch so delicate a subject with the tenderness and caution which belong to it—but it is one on which I cannot consent to be wholly silent. The sentiments of our late revered Monarch are well known, nor has it ever been disputed, that he protested with such firmness against what is called Catholic Emancipation, as to declare that his single Vote should prevent it.—Assuming that similar sentiments are likely to actuate any succeeding Monarch, who owes his throne to the influence of Protestant Principles, and its stability to their conservation—who feels the obligation of his Coronation Oath—and remembers his covenant with his people—would it be decent or patriotic to propose a measure for the Royal assent, which could only be viewed as a compro-

mise with sentiments directly opposed to the first elements of the Constitution, and as involving a dereliction of those principles from which the line of Hanover dates its original exaltation, and to which it owes its subsequent glories? Assuming still, that such would be the feelings with which a proposal of this kind must be contemplated, how painful, beyond the power of expression, would it be to the Monarch of our united Empire to be found, for the first time, affixing his Veto to a measure, which the other branches of the Legislature should have previously sanctioned with their approbation, as probably not acting under the peculiar bond and guarantee of those official and personal obligations which the Constitution has imposed upon THE MONARCH in reference to this particular question—I ask, whether any real lover of his King, or his country, would desire to witness the First authority in a Protestant state, contending with an alternative of this description; or wish to expose that authority to the afflicting consequences which might ensue from his conscientious refusal. The nature of the subject must prevent enlargement upon those *consequences*—you will indeed, yourself, be as ready to admit them as any one: but the way in which you will attempt to escape from such a difficulty, will be to contend, that such a thing as a refusal cannot reasonably be anticipated; you will, no doubt, assert, as you have virtually done already, that the measure of Emancipation is one of such unequivocal and unmixed good, that no single doubt should be entertained upon it, in the highest, any more than in the lowest, quarter—and that, therefore, every fear of future consequences may be confidently committed to the winds. You will, doubtless, expect that any existing Monarch should be as easily satisfied as yourself, that only the highest advantages can follow the concessions; and, consequently, that there can be no pretence, on his part, for opposing the universal flow of milk and honey which is to irrigate the whole land, so soon as this hopeful accession of Popish Legislators, Privy Counsellors, Judges, Magistrates, and Jurymen, shall have taken place. Not being myself able to climb to such a dazzling

elevation as the Pisgah from which you have beheld the enchanting prospects in store for us, I must be permitted to remain content with the humble enjoyment of present happiness, in the fertile vale of England's Protestant privileges; and while, I trust, that no British Sovereign will ever be persuaded to encounter the desperate risk to which you invite him, I would go farther, and spare him the odium of refusing what a multitude of wicked men, emboldened by your ingenious reasonings, will not fail to represent as the greatest boon which subjects could ask, or a King concede.

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

AMICUS PROTESTANS.

LETTER VII.

SIR,

In illustration of a part of my last Letter, I would add, that the English Roman Catholic Peers are Eight in number,—the Irish, Nine,—and the Scotch, Two.

The English Roman Catholic Peers are understood to be

The Duke of Norfolk.

The Earl of Shrewsbury.

Viscount Fauconberg.

Baron Stourton.

———Petre.

———Arundel.

———Dormer.

———Clifford, [of Chudleigh.]

The Irish Romish Catholic Peers are understood to be

The Earl of Fingal.

——— Waterford and Wexford.*

* This Title is at present united in the Earl of Shrewsbury.

The Earl of Kentmare.
 Viscount Gormanstown.
 ——— Netterville.
 ——— Taaffe.
 ——— Southwell.
 Baron Trimleston.
 ——— French.

The Scotch Roman Catholic Peers are understood to be

The Earl of Traquair.
 ——— Newburgh.

The Roman Catholic Baronets of England (Seventeen in number) are understood to be

Created.

Sir William Gerrard,—Lancashire.....1611.
 Sir Edward Hales,—Kent.....1611.
 Sir Henry Englefield,—Berks.....1621.
 Sir George Jerningham,—Norfolk.....1621.
 Sir Henry Tichborne,—Hants.....1620.
 Sir George Throckmorton,—Berks.....1642.
 Sir Edward Blount,—Shropshire.....1642.
 Sir Henry Hunlock,—Derbyshire.....1643.
 Sir Carneby Haggerstone,—Lincolnshire..1643.
 Sir Thomas Webb,—Wiltshire.....1644.
 Sir R. Smythe,—Warwickshire.....1669.
 Sir Richard Bedingfield,—Norfolk.....1660.
 Sir T. H. Stanly,—Cheshire.....1661.
 Sir Thomas Gage,—Suffolk.....1662.
 Sir H. Maire Lawson,—Yorkshire.....1665.
 Sir Piere Mertyn,—Flintshire.....1670.
 Sir Thomas Constable,—Staffordshire....1814.

The Roman Catholic Baronets of Ireland (Six in number) are understood to be

Sir Edward Bellew,—Louth.....1608.
 Sir John Blake,—Galway.....1622.
 Sir John Burke,—Roscommon.....1628.

Sir John Burke,—Galway.....1797.
 Sir T. Esmonde,—Wexford.....1628.
 Sir George Goold,—Cork.....1801.

Amongst the English Roman Catholics, are many families whose present heads, are mostly Country gentlemen of ancient lineage, and considerable wealth, but of unambitious, and retired habits. Such are the names of Constable, Clifford, Weld, Howard, Plowden, Townley, Giffard, Jones, Stapleton, Carey, Stonor, Eyre, Heneage, Stanley, Turberville, Selby, Browne, Tunstall, Eyston, Errington, Chichester, Chomley, Tasborough, Biddulph, Eccleston, Huddleston, Berrington, Charlton, Dulton, Sheldon, Perrers, Canning, Berkely, Manby, Riddall, Davell, Fermor, Trafford, Weston, &c. The friends of Emancipation assume, that the quiescent state of the great Roman Catholic families, is disadvantageous to the country at large, and that a principal use of the proposed changes, will be to present a stimulus to the ambition of the many Roman Catholic Noblemen, and Gentlemen, who are at present blushing unseen, and wasting their energies in an inglorious repose. It may, perhaps, however, be as well to consider, whether the calling into action so many dormant faculties, and supplying them with excitement, by the application of the most powerful principle of action which can operate on the human mind, may be altogether wise and considerate, so far as our own Ecclesiastical, and Civil Polity, are concerned; and, in order that some judgment may be formed as to the means, and facilities, which the Heads and Leaders of the Roman Catholic Cause would find ready to their hands, under a change in the whole frame of our Laws, I will notice the present state of the Roman Catholics in England.

It is not to be doubted, that their total number in England and Wales, much exceeds 300,000. Some persons even compute the number at 400,000, but I am inclined to think this estimate as *at present*, overstated, and that the truth may lie between. The principal Catholic Counties are Lan-

Lancashire, Yorkshire, Staffordshire, Warwickshire, and Northumberland. These, with Durham, Cheshire, Norfolk, Suffolk, Kent, and Worcestershire, contain at least 200,000. London and its suburbs, with Surrey and Middlesex, have certainly been underrated at 50,000. The remainder are scattered throughout the other Counties and Cities, but chiefly in Bristol, Bath, Portsmouth, Plymouth, Southampton, Exeter, Gloucester, and a few watering places. In the single summer of 1813, Dr. Smith, then the Vicar Assistant of Dr. Gibson, in the Northern District, and now the Vicar Apostolic, confirmed 3000 Roman Catholic Children in three towns alone, viz.—

In Manchester.....	800
Liverpool	1000
Preston	1200

In every County of England, there are now Roman Catholic Chapels, amounting in number to not fewer than 900, mostly erected within the last 25 years, and generally commodious, and well built. Lancashire alone enumerates above 100 Romish Chapels. Most of the Roman Catholic country gentlemen of fortune maintain Chapels in their own houses, independently of the estimate above given, in which Mass is daily performed, for all who chuse to attend. The public Chapels are no longer hidden in remote and obscure situations, as they were even within our own memory, and the magnificent Temple of Dagon, lately erected in the centre of the City of London, affords a remarkable example of the confidence of the Roman Catholics in the Religious indifference of the Protestants. To this Chapel, Protestants are now invited, on the chief fasts and festivals, by advertisements previously inserted in the public newspapers, when collections are made; and there a multitude of our inconsiderate countrymen are content to sanction, by their presence, the Idolatries of the Romish Worship, (which their forefathers refused to do, even when death was the consequence,) and to give their money liberally at the door, for the support of a system of

Idolatry and Superstition. Conversions to Popery are of course no longer a rare occurrence in Protestant England, no can this be any matter of surprize, when its outward attractions for the eye and ear are considered, as well as its peculiar adaptation to the heart of every man in a state of nature. The influence of the College of Jesuits, at Stonyhurst, near Preston, on that Town and the surrounding Country, is very remarkable, many of the Townsmen and adjacent Farmers, as well as several of their connections, having now renounced the worship of the Protestant Church;* and it is no uncommon thing for Roman Catholics of fortune, (especially females) to support the entire expence of educating the sons of British Farmers, for the Romish Priesthood, at the College of Stonyhurst. Clitherow, (in that neighbourhood) may now be considered a Popish town. At Walsall and Wolverhampton, in Staffordshire, the Roman Catholics, as in many other Towns, are rapidly increasing. In the former place, more than one or two instances of conversion have recently occurred, which have excited a strong sensation; and among others which might be mentioned, the two daughters of the late Protestant Rector of that Town, who are the sisters of a beneficed Protestant Clergyman, now officiating in the same county, have deserted the profession of the Reformed Church, and now go regularly to Mass. The Roman Catholics of Walsall used till of late, to be contented with a Chapel at Bloxwich, about a mile from Walsall, (where they have a School), but they have now converted the Assembly room of Walsall, into a Chapel, in addition. Their Priest was educated at Oscott, near Birmingham, where is a Romish college and seminary on a very extensive scale, and there are to be found the children of Protestants (so called) as well as of Papists! There being a deficiency of Protestant schools in that neighbourhood, many children from Perry Bar, Wilton, Aldridge, and other places in the vicinity, are sent to this Romish

* For a full account of this College, its wealth, and influence, see the HISTORY OF THE JESUITS, lately published, 2 vols. octavo. London.

Seminary, where they are taught at a very cheap rate. One effect of this amalgamation, is to diminish the distaste and dread which once prevailed for the Religion of Popery; and numerous Proselytes have been notoriously gained at this College. Its conductors have lately purchased from its savings, a handsome Estate at Perry-Bar, by which means the number of their dependants has been increased, and their influence extended. Much money has been lately expended in improving and embellishing this Establishment, where there is a fine and spacious Chapel, which is attended by persons residing within a circuit of several miles distance. It was here that the present Duke of Norfolk received his education, and here the Popish Bishop and Vicar Apostolic, Dr. Milner, has apartments, and occasionally officiates. He generally resides at Sedgley Park, near Wolverhampton, where is another Roman Catholic seminary of considerable extent.

In Birmingham and its vicinity, the increase of Roman Catholics is placed beyond all doubt. They had formerly but one Chapel in Birmingham, with a congregation of moderate size, and few attendants except of the working class; there are now two Chapels, well frequented, and many of the attendants are of great respectability and property. In that which was last built, an organ has lately been erected, at a considerable expence. At Handsworth, near Birmingham, is another Roman Catholic School. At Harvington, near Chaddesley, in Worcestershire, the extreme activity of the Romish Priest in proselyting, has recently engaged him in literary hostilities with the Rector of Chaddesley. The estates in that neighbourhood chiefly belong to the Roman Catholic family of the Throckmortons. In Manchester, the principal Priest of the place, emboldened by the rapid increase of Popery in that Town, and neighbourhood, has recently made an attack on the British and Foreign Bible Society, and its Agents, and indeed on the Bible itself, and the whole Protestant Church, which attack has given rise to some controversy. Notice of this fact, as also some judicious remarks on a funeral sermon, lately published by the same divine, in which the Romish Doctrines of Justification by

human merit, and Purgatory, are stoutly maintained, may be found in the CHRISTIAN OBSERVER, for December, 1821. The small parish of Tixall, in Staffordshire, is nearly become a Roman Catholic one, from the exertions of a powerful land owner, who possesses much influence from his personal respectability, and extensive property, and who spares no pains, with the aid of his family, in forwarding the good work of conversion. He is now erecting a detached Romish Chapel, of considerable size and elegance, which will be open to the surrounding Country, as a smaller one in the interior of the mansion has hitherto been. In Tixall, as elsewhere, Protestant Children are taught, free of expence, by Roman Catholic instructors, and the professors of either faith now inter-marry with each other as a matter of course!

There are several regular Ecclesiastical and Monastic Establishments of Popery, for both sexes, in this Protestant Country, some of which are of considerable magnitude, and are handsomely endowed; especially those at Taunton, Shepton Mallett, Lulworth, and St. Gregory, Downside; while Schools, for the gratuitous education both of Roman Catholic and Protestant Children, are springing up in every direction; where, if the latter are not actually carried to Mass, they must necessarily imbibe such principles in early life, as they are never likely to lose—to say nothing of the Books which are placed in their hands, or of the companions with whom they associate. A remarkable instance of this description is to be found at the end of Stamford Street, in the Blackfriars Road, where is a Popish School of considerable magnitude, now containing nearly 400 Children, which (perhaps upon the modern system of liberality towards all Religions, and of adherence to none), was erected in a considerable degree with PROTESTANT MONEY, and which bears upon its front an equivocal inscription, which in one way of reading it, would make His present Majesty appear to be the Head and Patron of the SCHOOL, although by another construction, it may be understood to convey that it is only of the Benevolent Society of St. Patrick that His Majesty is the Patron. Let this juggle pass—but I must at all events protest against the jesuitism of applying to such purposes as building Romish

Schools and Chapels, the money collected from well-meaning Protestants, who support Romish Societies, under the impression that they are only aiding objects of conviviality or benevolence. They are made to do much more by their Romish friends, whether they will believe it or not.

I have already noticed, in my Fifteenth Letter to Mr. WILBERFORCE, the official account of the Associated Catholic Schools under the Society of St. Patrick, which appeared in the principal London Newspapers, in June 1820, and commented on the circumstance of 2460 Children, having been then under the Education of Roman Catholic Teachers, in London alone, with a large proportion of Protestant money. All this is very intelligible, and they who are thus inadvertently forwarding the insidious designs of the Ancient Foes of Britain, and British Liberty, will do well to pause, before it be too late.

It appears from the NEW TIMES, of the 15th June, 1821, that £360 was collected from Roman Catholics, and Protestants, for the Associated Catholic Charities, at the Dinner given at the Freemason's Tavern, on 14th June of that year, when no fewer than 700 Children were introduced to the Meeting, and that at the Dinner of the St. Patrick's Benevolent Society, on the 16th March 1822, the enormous amount of £1665 5s. was collected for the Romish Schools and Chapels! I leave the fact of these Love-feasts to speak for itself.

In the Roman Catholic Laity's Directory, for the year 1822, (published with Authority, by Keating and Brown, Duke-street), are Advertisements or Notices, of the following Romish Chapels, in and about London. The newly built one in Moor-fields; Virginia-street, Ratcliffe-highway; Great St. Thomas Apostle, Bow-lane; Duke-street, Lincoln's Inn-fields; where is a Society for praying Souls out of Purgatory; Sutton-street, Soho; Warwick-street, Golden-square; Spanish-place, Manchester-square; South-street, Grosvenor-square; Little George-street, Portman-square; Romney-terrace, Marsham-street; (the Congregation of which consists of at least 2000 persons.) London-road, St. George's-fields; (the Congregation of which consists of about 7000 persons.) East-lane, Bermondsey; (amounting to nearly 3000, and where Schools are in contem-

plation.) Clarendon square, Somers-town ; where is a Purgatorian Society). Wade-street, Poplar ; (where a School House is intended to be erected, and the Pastor of which Chapel (the Rev. B. Barber) has engaged, in public print, /“ to offer “ up the Masses of two Sundays, every year, for the Benefactors to the Chapel, and likewise one Mass in the year “ for all who lie in the burying ground belonging to it !” Chapel-place, Chelsea ;* Holland-street, Kensington ; King-street, Hammersmith, and Brook Green House, Hammersmith ; Shrewsbury-place, Isleworth ; Holly-place, Hampstead ; Clark’s-buildings, Greenwich ; New-road, Woolwich ; Chatham Barracks, Brompton. At a greater distance in the Country, are enumerated (among many others) Chapels at Sheerness ; Margate ; Richmond ; Carshalton ; Stratford ; Essex ; Pilgrim Hatch, near Brentwood ; Winchester ; Burton Chapel, near Christchurch ; Portsea ; Gosport ; Southampton ; Newport, Isle of Wight ; Cowes, Ditto ; Brighton ; Salisbury ; Blandford ; Cannington, near Bridgewater ; (the residence of the Vicar Apostolic, of the Western District). Shepton Mallet ; Cheltenham ; Abergavenny ; Exeter ; Plymouth Dock ; Harvington Hall, near Kidderminster ; Blackmore Park, Malvern Hills ; Stourbridge ; Reading ; Worcester ; Oxford ; Bath ; Coventry ; Warwick ; Birmingham, noticed already, (the Chaplain of

* It was of this Chapel that the NEW TIMES, of 24th March, 1820, favoured the Protestant Public with the following edifying information. “ On Sunday last, the 19th instant, in the Chapel erected for the use “ of the Catholic Veterans, of Chelsea Hospital, the course of public “ prayers daily offered up since the 19th of January, for *the repose of the* “ *Soul* of His Royal Highness the DUC DE BERRI, was closed by a solemn High Mass. The Rev. Mr. Voyaux de Franous, Chaplain to the “ French Embassy, and Pastor of the Catholic Congregation at Chelsea, “ delivered a very impressive discourse, adapted to the occasion, upon “ the text ‘ Blessed is he that understandeth concerning the Needy and “ the Poor, the Lord will deliver him in the evil day.’ He was assisted “ at the Altar, by three other Honorary Canons, of the Royal Chapter “ of St. Denis, the Rev. Messrs. Mathias, Vasnier, and Dubosq. The “ whole ceremony was conducted with the greatest order and solemnity, “ and was numerously attended.”

which, the Rev. E. PEACH, has lately published a statement of a pretended Miracle, performed by himself on a young Protestant female, a full account of which, may be seen in the CHRISTIAN OBSERVER, for February 1822). Walsall, already noticed, and Bloxwich, near it, (where is a Purgatorian Society, under the sanction of the Midland Vicar Apostolic). Longbitch, near Wolverhampton; Lichfield; Stafford; Cobridge, in the Potteries; Ashley, in Staffordshire; Leicester; Nottingham; Derby; Knaresborough; Halywalls; Pontefract; Whitby (where is a circulating Roman Catholic Library, and a provision for Education). Liverpool; Poulton; Shields; Bungay; Glasgow, (a magnificent and capacious Edifice lately erected, the Congregation of which is stated in the Laity's Directory, to consist of 20,000 Souls!) Falmouth; Taunton; Wolverhampton; Arundel; Norwich; Ulverston, (where considerable enlargement is contemplated in the Chapel, and as an inducement to the contributions of the Faithful, the following tempting notification appears with the recommendation of the two Vicars Apostolic of the Northern, and Western Districts, the Jesuits of Stonyhurst College, and three Romish Priests, of Preston, Lancaster, and Ulverston; viz. "Besides the ordinary commemoration and prayers offered up in the new Chapel for the Benefactors, *both alive and dead*; a particular service shall be performed for them every year." Preston; a Chapel is in contemplation at Northampton.

In the same Work, among the various Catholic Charities, for GRATUITOUS EDUCATION, now found among us, there occur Advertisements or Notices, of the following, viz.—The St. Patrick's Charity Schools, in Denmark-street, and Dean-street, Soho; and the Asylum for Female Orphans, in Church-row, Hampstead; in addition to which, the Associated Catholic Charities, are stated to have Five great Schools, viz. Two in the neighbourhood of Moorfields; one near Lincoln's Inn-fields; and Two in Mary-le-bone, in which about 700 Children, are under Education. At the Southwark Charity Schools, upwards of a hundred Children are now Educating. The East London Charity Schools, have lately purchased valuable premises in

Red Lion-street, Wapping, capable of affording convenient accommodation for 250 boys, and 150 girls. Two numerous Schools in Somers Town; the Male School being liberally supported, and the Female containing about 100 Children. Two Establishments for Education in Ratcliffe Highway, containing 100 boys and 40 girls. Marsham-street, Westminster, a School for both sexes. A School at Chatham Barracks, Brompton, for upwards of 100 of both Sexes. A Roman Catholic Orphan Society was instituted in 1818, one object of which is "to enable the Children to continue at their Schools." At Stratford, in Essex, are considerable Day, Evening, and Sunday Schools. At Cobridge, in the Potteries, the Vicar Apostolic, of the Midland District, has publicly certified, under the date of September 1821, that "the Pastor of that place is engaged in erecting Schools for the Youth of both Sexes," and the Laity's Directory informs us, that a School-house is now begun, that there are "300 Children in want of Education," and that "at the different Schools there," (the PROTESTANT Schools), "they are without the first, and most important point, RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION!" while at Bermondsey, near London, it is stated, that "Schools have now been opened, where numbers of boys and girls are admitted, many of whom have been *withdrawn from Anti-Catholic Schools.*" Angkce the Schools of our Protestant National Establishment!

Among the Colleges and Seminaries, for Education and Religious Establishments, advertised, or noticed, in the Laity's Directory, the following occur, viz.—St. Edmund's College, near Ware; Ushaw College, near Durham; St. Mary's College, Oscot, near Birmingham; Stonyhurst College of Jesuits, near Preston; and a Seminary for Education, in connection with it, at Hurst Green; Ampleforth College, near York; St. Gregory's College, Downside, near Bath, where is a Monastery. In Scotland, are two Roman Catholic Colleges, one for the Lowlands, in Aberdeenshire; the other for the Highlands, in Argyleshire.

Among the Female Religious Establishments, or Nunneries, noticed in the Laity's Directory, occur the following, viz. the Barr, at York; Bishop's House, Winchester; the very consi-

derable Religious establishment at Taunton, already mentioned ; New Hall, near Chelmsford ; Spetisbury House, Blandford ; Stafford House, Warwickshire ; Clare House, Plymouth ; Caverswall Castle ; Stone, Staffordshire ; Hartpury Court, near Gloucester ; Scorton Hall, near Catterick, where a Chapel is about to be built by Subscription ; Orrel Mount, near Wigan ; a very considerable Establishment of the Sisters of St. Francis de Sales, at Shepton Mallet ; and a Religious Community in King-street, Hammersmith.

Of stipendiary places of Roman Catholic Education, the following are noticed in the Laity's Directory,—for Males—Sedgley Park, near Wolverhampton ; Baddesley Academy ; Acocks Green, Birmingham ; Cowley Hill Academy, near Prescott ; Pontefract, conducted by a Jesuit, from Stonyhurst ; Grafton House, Worksop, (a place of preparation for the larger Romish Colleges) ; Bornheim House, Carshalton ; Somers Town Academy (kept by another Jesuit from Stonyhurst) ; Kent House, Hammersmith ; Southall, near London ; Great Newton-street, Liverpool ; Shefford, Bedfordshire ; and Church-row, Hampstead.

The following Roman Catholic Schools for Females, are advertised, or noticed, in the Laity's Directory, viz. Woolton, near Liverpool ; Crane-street, Chester ; Little Beake-street, York ; Wolverhampton ; and Saredon, near Wolverhampton ; Walsall, Handsworth, near Birmingham ; Chaddesley Corbet, near Kidderminster ; Chipping Norton ; Laws Hall, near Bury St. Edmund's ; Norwich ; Brook Green House, Hammersmith ; Montague House, Ditto ; Thornton-street, Kensington ; Queen's Elm, Brompton ; Hampstead. In London, Beaumont-street, Portland-place ; and Fitzroy-street, Fitzroy-square.—Codsall House, near Wolverhampton, is a School for both Sexes.

A system of organization and vigilance is observed by the Romish Hierarchy, which appears to involve something more than mere Ecclesiastical discipline. The Members of that Church in England, are governed by Vicars Apostolic, who are deputed by the Pope, and exercise Vicarial Powers of no ordinary character. Their jurisdiction is of a summary, and ex-

tensive nature; and affords an example of the *imperium in imperio*, which called forth the severe reprobation of LORD COLCHESTER, in his celebrated Protest against the *Romish Claims* in the House of Commons; in which he declared the exercise of such a power in this Country, to be absolutely contrary to Law; abhorrent to the British Constitution; and pregnant with danger. Each of these Vicars Apostolic is a Bishop in the *Romish Church*, and, of course, has taken the celebrated CATHOLIC Oath, to oppose and persecute all Heretics (or Protestants), to the utmost of his power. Of these Vicars, Dr. SMITH, presides over the Northern; Dr. MILNER, over the MIDLAND; Dr. POYNTER, over the London; and Dr. COLLINGRIDGE, over the Western Districts.

It is no longer a secret that some of the principal London Newspapers, as well as others in the Country, are decidedly under Roman Catholic influence; and will admit of no reasoning, but on the side of "EMANCIPATION," (as it is called) as the ablest Reasoner on the Protestant side of the question, may soon convince himself, if he will make the experiment; while on the other hand, no single opportunity is omitted of earnestly recommending a departure, from our long established policy, as essential to the interests, if not to the existence, of the Country. The NEW TIMES in particular has never ceased, from its commencement, to advocate the Roman Catholic Claims, a line of policy the more remarkable in that particular case, as it is well known that all the arguments of the Opposition are on that side of the question; so that this is perhaps the solitary instance in which the Loyal and Orthodox Editor of that Journal, is most inconsistently found in perfect harmony, through the year, with Messrs. HOBHOUSE, HUMPHREYS, COBBETT, HUNT, and HONE, all decided sticklers, in common with himself, for Roman Catholic Emancipation?

Thus much for certain advantages which the present state of the Roman Catholics in England appears likely to afford them, in attaining their ultimate object of Ecclesiastical and Political power, should they succeed in obtaining the concessions which they now modestly solicit, in the first instance. The ordinary

condition of Ireland, appears to afford a far less problematical indication of absolute ruin, as a consequence of the proposed concessions, but this must be the subject of my next Letter.

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient humble Servant,

AMICUS PROTESTANS.

LETTER VIII.

SIR,

The peculiar situation of that vulnerable heel of the British Achilles—Ireland; and the conduct of the Roman Catholics there, invest the concession of the Romish Claims with considerations of far higher moment, and render that concession a far more formidable thing, than would be the case in England proper, whatever might be the increase in the numbers, or influence, of the Roman Catholics among ourselves. In the Sister-country, extended concession has only provoked a vitiated appetite to crave for more—whatever has been obtained, has been received as a matter of right;—whatever has been withheld, as food for fresh discontent, and cause for new revolt. This view of the subject has been so well put by a late writer, that I shall avail myself of the substance of his arguments.

The privileges which the Roman Catholics obtained by the Act of 1793, were considered by themselves, at the time, as complete Emancipation, since by that, and former Acts, every restriction with regard to liberty of worship, the transmission of their property, and the education of their children, was removed; and their present disability is only exclusion from certain offices of power and trust, which they could not possibly hold, consistently with their allegiance to the Pope, without doing every thing in their power to subvert our Protestant Establishment. Nay, by the Act of 1793, Political Power, in one kind, was conferred upon them; for it gave them the right of voting for Members of Parliament, but to

use the argument of a certain nobleman, "the moment they gained this standing place, they assumed the language of menace, and intimidation." Having obtained from a Protestant Legislature far more than they at first expected, they began to aspire still higher, and now they regard all that has been conceded to them as nothing; they are still demanding "Emancipation," as if they were still in bondage; and nothing less will satisfy them now, than the surrender of the Kingdom to them. According to their own principles indeed, they must be in bondage while Heretics shall bear rule over them; nor will they consider themselves "emancipated," till they get the government into their own hands, and unite the kingdom to the See of Rome. This change, upon the supposition that they really believe their own doctrine, must appear to them a very proper and laudable object. Doubtless, if we were Papists, we should think so too; and all Papists must think so, upon their own principles. They believe that Jesus Christ gave to St. Peter, and through him to his Successor, the Pope of Rome, sovereignty over the whole Christian world, including Great Britain and Ireland; and that for supporting Romish Christianity, with becoming splendour, their pious ancestors appropriated immense wealth, including much of the best land in the kingdom, and built a great number of magnificent Edifices, which are at this day in the hands of Heretics. They believe, that by a series of acts, of unparalleled wickedness, the King of England threw off his allegiance to the Pope, abandoned the true Church, and drew away the majority with him; that he most sacrilegiously plundered the Holy Church of all her wealth, which he bestowed upon a Church of modern creation, of which he declared himself the Head. A Papist, on the contrary, plumes himself on his having remained unshaken in his allegiance to the Holy See. On this account he feels himself superior to Protestants, whom he looks upon as Heretics, and Schismatics; and, what is perhaps worst of all, vicious depredators of the property of his Church; in short, as unjustly holding possession of that which belongs not to them, but to his Holy Mother. He

naturally, upon his own principles, desires the restoration of this property to the right owner, which implies the restitution of the Church of Rome to all her former splendour and power; and he feels himself imperiously called upon, to use every means to bring about this happy restitution.

Besides, there was a great deal of property forfeited by Papists in successive rebellions, especially in Ireland, from the time of Queen Elizabeth, down to that of King William. These rebellions were encouraged by the Pope, with a view to the restoration of Popery; and property that was forfeited in consequence of obedience to the Pope, in defence of what is deemed the true Religion, must be considered, by Papists, as having been unjustly wrested out of the hands of the lawful proprietors. Perhaps one half of the land in Ireland is in this predicament. The present possessors hold it in virtue of purchase, or of inheritance, from those to whom Queen Elizabeth, and subsequent Sovereigns, gave it, on the attainder of the ancient proprietors; but upon the principles which every Papist holds to be infallible, all these forfeitures were unjust. The property belongs to the lawful heirs, and lineal descendants, of the ancient proprietors. When Popery shall be re-established, every man, it is expected, will obtain his own; and it is as a step towards this, that Papists are so anxious to be in Parliament, where they will occupy a higher standing ground; and where, by combination, and perseverance, they will ultimately carry their point. There are many poor persons in Ireland, who have the record of their lineage distinctly preserved, who publicly claim to be the heirs of certain estates, and have never relinquished the hope, that the property will be restored to them, or to their descendants. In order to preserve the knowledge of it, it has been the practice of Fathers, from age to age, to preserve pedigrees of their families, properly authenticated, and to lead their children round the boundaries of the lands which they claim as theirs. All this is done in the hope, that one day, these lands will revert to the right owners.

LORD CARLETON, in his celebrated speech in the House of Lords, declared, that "Not many years ago, maps of the Irish forfeited estates were industriously circulated on the Continent, an indication that some important object was looked at for attainment; and that it was desirable to conciliate foreign Catholic potentates, with a view to the success of that project. Since the Union, it has been openly avowed, that the Revolution was an usurpation; the exclusion of Roman Catholics from Seats in Parliament, an exercise of the power of the Legislature; that the old Roman Catholic proprietors had never offended; that the confiscations were unjust; and that the present possessors held by usurpation, and ought to be dispossessed."

What is thus distinctly avowed, is no more than what is naturally to be expected. Papists must desire the restoration of the ancient order and state of things; believing, as they do, in the divinity of their Religion, they confidently expect such restoration; and what men desire, and expect, they will most certainly endeavour to accomplish. Give them the power of doing it, and it will be done. It is only what every man feels he would do, if he were in their circumstances, and believing as they believe.

Nothing can be more natural, than that if they desire the re-establishment of their Religion, and the restoration of what they consider their property, they should aspire to places of power, in order to enable them to effect these objects; but, that Protestants should strengthen them with their aid, is, beyond measure, astonishing. But such is the fact. There is scarcely a company of half a dozen individuals into which one can enter, in which advocates of what is called "Catholic Emancipation," will not be found. Nay, there are Protestants, and Presbyterians too, who go the length of maintaining, that if it be proper to have an established Religion, that of Ireland ought to be Popery, since Papists are the majority. Upon the same principle, it is proper, that Mahometanism should be the established Religion in Turkey, Arabia, and Persia. And, by all means, be

it so, if the Government and People in those Countries, choose to have it so. The powers of Christendom have no right to hinder them, or to force Christianity upon them; but, for *Christians* to argue, that it is proper, and right, to establish Error, Delusion, and Idolatry, because the majority of the people are deluded Idolators, would be somewhat strange.—Not more strange, however, than for Protestants to argue, for the establishment of Popery, where the subjects of that delusion happen to be the majority. I would say, if it be proper to have an established Religion in any country, it ought to be the *true* Religion; in which, I am sure, all Papists will agree with me, whether all Protestants will or not. As Christians, and Protestants, we have nothing to do with Popery, or any other false Religion, but to endeavour to win men from it, by instruction, and persuasion. To establish error of any kind, is to throw an obstruction in the way of those, who would perform this Christian duty. It is to put a weapon into the hands of the Enemies of the Truth, with which they will destroy its Friends; and, to establish Popery in Ireland, would be at once, to extinguish the light, that has begun to dawn upon it; for it is a fact, confirmed by the experience of ages, that, where Papists have power, they will persecute, and destroy, those who presume to teach genuine Christianity.

There are, however, few Protestants who contemplate the possibility of Popery becoming again the Established Religion, in any part of the British Isles; and, perhaps, fewer who think it ought to be so. Most of the advocates of “Emancipation,” mean by the term, no more than admissibility into places of power; and, judging, either from their own indifference about the ascendancy of one Church over another, or their consciousness that they would not make use of power, if they had it, to enforce conformity to the principles of their own sect, they charitably conclude, that Papists would be equally indulgent to those who might not choose to conform to Popery, and equally indifferent about the re-establishment of it. But all this is contradicted by

the avowed principles of Papists, and by every historical fact for a thousand years, that bears any relation to the subject. Suppose a Papist in Parliament, or in the Privy Council, were even disposed to act as liberally as a Protestant, and to refuse to lend himself to promote the designs of his sect, his Priest would soon teach him better manners. The salvation of his soul depends upon his keeping on good terms with his Confessor, who has power, as he believes, to absolve, or not absolve him, from his sins; and this absolution, is usually granted upon condition, that the Penitent shall undergo some penance, or perform some good work; and, of all the good works that can be devised by a Papist, there is none more meritorious, than the extirpation of Heresy, that is, the Protestant Religion, and the establishment of Popery in its place. If a Papist has really imbibed the spirit of his Religion, the work will appear to himself in this meritorious light, and he will feel it to be his most imperious duty; and if he has not this, as the result of his own conviction, his Confessor will soon make him both feel, and act, as he ought to do for the sake of his Holy Church. No wise man would take into his confidential service, or intrust the charge of his affairs, with a known dependant, and sworn vassal, of an enemy, and a rival; but, every Papist, living in a Protestant state, is a vassal, and a dependant, of a rival and hostile master, and, of course, cannot be safely entrusted with power over Protestants, or with the confidential management of their affairs.

It may be laid down as an incontrovertible proposition, that by "Emancipation," which Papists demand with so much clamour, they mean, ultimately, nothing less than the restoration of the Church, and other forfeited property, as well as the establishment of their Religion. There are, doubtless, Protestants so romantically generous, that they would concede even this to them, and we have all heard doctrines advanced, that must naturally lead to it. It is admitted, that the Tithes and Church Lands once belonged to Papists; and that many great Estates, now in the hands of

Protestants, were transferred from Papists, in consequence of what we call their Rebellion, but what they call their Loyalty, and their Religion: and, if the Church of Rome and her adherents, were unjustly deprived of this property, why ought it not to be restored? Is not restitution, a Christian duty? Yes: but if they were not unjustly deprived of that property, it would be great injustice now to take it from those, whose ancestors paid a price for it, or who received it as the reward of meritorious services.

My purpose is not so much to enter upon the subject of forfeitures, and attainders, which are matters merely civil and political, as to shew, that Popery, as a false, disloyal, and persecuting system of Religion, ought to incapacitate those who profess it, from holding places of power, and trust, among those who believe, and profess, the true Religion; because, it imperiously binds them to use whatever power they may possess, to extirpate Truth. But, I suppose, all Civilians are agreed, that Rebellion against the Sovereign power, as established by law, infers the forfeiture of the property, and even the life of the rebel. The property, reverts to the Sovereign, who may give it away, or sell it, as he pleases. There is no injustice in this; for no subject ever held his property upon any other condition; and the man who holds property without the condition of allegiance, is not a subject, but a Sovereign. But I shall be told, perhaps, that Papists do not admit, that the conduct of their ancestors was Rebellion; and I reply by asking, what Rebel ever made such an admission? If the opinion of Rebels themselves, and of their advocates, be the rule by which we are to judge, there never was Rebellion in the world, and never will be. If modern Papists shall seriously maintain, that the conduct of their Ancestors, by which they forfeited their Estates, was not Rebellion, it will be fair to retort, that they hold it lawful to act as their Ancestors did, and if Protestants be wise, they will not put it in their power to do so.

What was called Church property, was equally subject to Civil Allegiance ; for those who gave it to the Church, could not convey it more unconditionally than they themselves received it. The Church of Rome, as such, never owned Allegiance to the Protestant Sovereign of Britain ; and of course, cannot lawfully hold property ; and if she had done so, it would long ago have been forfeited by the Rebellions excited by her Head, which must be understood to have had the consent of the Members. In point of fact, however, the Church property was not in general confiscated, except in Scotland. In England, and Ireland, it was appropriated for the support of the purer system of the Reformation, and so it continues to this day. These few remarks may shew that in a Religious and Moral point of view, there is no injustice done to Irish Papists, by their exclusion from places of power, or in refusing to restore to them the property which their Ancestors forfeited.

Should it be said that too much is here assumed about the devotion of Papists to the See of Rome, and their hostility to our Protestant Government, it may be answered that evidence upon the point, is so abundant and so accessible that any man who chooses may satisfy himself on the subject. There are, however, Three works in particular, which furnish such a compendious view of the question, and contain such ample references to the most unquestionable authorities, that any man may, in a short time, obtain such information on the subject, as will make him dread the admission into places of power, of persons who really are not their own masters, but the instruments of a Spiritual Power, that is bent on the overthrow of the Protestant Religion, and the destruction of its Ministers and Defenders. I mean—the *Annals of Ireland*, by the Rev. Mr. GRAHAM, commencing in 1535, and coming down to the period of the Revolution ; Mr. SPEARING'S *Work*, which comes down to the present day, entitled “ The true state of the question, whether the admissibility of Romanists, to the higher offices of the State, be compatible with the principles of the British Constitution,” and

" The History of the Irish Rebellion, in 1798, by SIR RICHARD MUSGRAVE, BART."—Dublin 1802.

Thus far, the Reasoner to whom I have referred.—Let it then be remembered that it is not only in ENGLAND where the danger would, (at least in the first instance) be less obvious, but that it is in IRELAND, where this portentous change is recommended to take place by Christian Statesmen, and declared by them to be so far from awakening their fears, that they deem it to be absolutely indispensable; nay, that it is our bounden duty to make this change; that it is a debt we have too long delayed to discharge; and that payment cannot, and ought not, to be longer protracted. Do such reasoners, however, really believe, in the midst of their overweening attachment to their new friends the Roman Catholics, that the PROTESTANTS of Ireland deserve no better measure than to be indecently dismissed from all place in their recollection, and all share in their affection? Is nothing due to the Protestant Church, and Cause, in Ireland, while so much is to be done for the Church of Rome, and her numerous adherents there? Are the affectionate attachment, and unshaken allegiance of the small, but faithful, minority of our Protestant Fellow Subjects in Ireland, to find no better reward from the Liberators of Africa, and the friends of Philanthropy, than the cool and heartless abandonment of them and theirs to the fury of those persons who only wait for an opportunity of avenging themselves, for what they consider to be the plunder of their own Church, and the waste of their own Estates.

Is it possible, Sir, that it can be any secret to Mr WILBERFORCE, or to yourself, as his Defender, that the Ecclesiastics of Ireland, are at least as much alive to the desirableness, and probability, of their again filling the Bishoprics, and Benefices, from which they have been ejected, as the Irish Laity are, to the importance of resuming their forfeited Estates; and can either Mr. WILBERFORCE, or yourself, require to be informed, that Titular Bishops, as well as other Dignitaries, are even now appointed to the higher offices in the Church, in regular succession, so that

there actually stand behind the curtain, ready for action, on the first shifting of the Political Scene, the entire dramatis personæ of a new order of things? Be assured, Sir, that a ready-made Constitution for the French, was not more duly ticketed and labelled in the well known Pigeon-holes of the ABBÉ SIREY, than is the Machinery of a Popish Establishment, all ready to the hands of our liberal Protestants, the instant they shall have helped the Church of Rome to remove the lets and hindrances which have so long stood in their way. And how, I would ask, do Irish Roman Catholics derive their Claim, to such an exclusive display of liberality, at the expence of the Protestant Church and Cause? What have these amiable persons done to ingratiate themselves so deeply in the esteem of our Modern Philanthropists. Even you, Sir, will not contend that their RELIGION has interested either Mr. WILBERFORCE, or yourself, in their favour. And is it then their LOYALTY, when it is notorious that they have repeatedly proffered their own services, nay tendered the Crown of their Sovereign, to Foreign Potentates; when it is well known that on the landing of General HUMBERT, in Ireland, he was joined, exclusively to a man, by Roman Catholics; and when it is equally certain that BUONAPARTE, through the whole course of his unprincipled career, enumerated among his warmest friends, and partizans, the Irish Roman Catholics, who made no secret of their joy on every fresh triumph he achieved; as the surest pledge of their own eventual success; and always sunk into depression and despondency, whenever his unjust and wicked usurpation experienced any reverse of fortune, as placing them yet further than ever, from the object of their unceasing desire—their separation from the Mother Country. Now let us only imagine the case of a King, surrounded with Popish Counsellors, and Popish Ministers, and then let us suppose, what is by no means impossible, a Popish Rebellion in Ireland, and what will be the situation of Government? If the Roman Catholics, who may now promise to maintain the Rights of the Protestant Established Church, should happen to change their minds, and call for the re-

establishment of the Popish Religion, what will then remain for us, but to give it to them? They now tell us it was the Religion of our Ancestors, and if, bye and bye, they should assert that it was a crime in us to depart from it, at all, and would be a crime in them to tolerate Heresy any longer, what will be the situation of our fellow Protestants in Ireland, who have at least as much claim to our sympathy, as the Roman Catholics? But even admitting that the *present* generation should be true to their pledge, what security have we that *the next* will not

“ recant
“ Vows made in pain, as violent and void.”

I am perfectly aware that, while all these evidences of Rebellion will be admitted by you, because they cannot be denied, it will yet be contended, that the grand specific of “Catholic Emancipation,” will cure all this tendency to the sin by which the angels fell; which is much the same thing as to contend, that if the rebel angels had only carried their own point, they would have been good angels ever after. We know the fact to be that they were not trusted, and, I should think this the safest course to adopt by those who are now making such a mighty stir for place and power, when every part of their preceding history shews that they are only capable of abusing them.

In addition, however, to the ordinarily unsettled state of the Irish Roman Catholics, there has been, for some time past, an impression on their minds, that the compleat triumph of their Church, and, of course, the defeat of the Protestant cause, is not far distant. The principal circumstance which has led to this conviction, (which is now remarkably prevalent), is the work, entitled “PASTORINI’S LETTERS,”—now known to have been written by the late DR. WALMESLEY, (a Romish Bishop, and Vicar-Apostolic of the Western District) which is a commentary on the Apocalypse, and which predicts the exaltation of the Romish Church and cause, in Ireland, as now nigh at hand. This work has had a most extensive circulation in Ireland, and is universally received by the Roman Catholics there,

as the undisputed voice of authority, and truth. The feeling which has been of late excited by it, and is at this moment in operation, in the Sister Country, can hardly be conceived by those who may not possess the means of information on the subject. The general abhorrence of the Protestant ascendancy, and of the connection with England, which are, alas ! too common in the best of times, have been greatly heightened by the appearance of this book ; and it is no secret, that all due advantage has been taken by such as have the spiritual direction of the mind and conscience in Ireland, of the ready disposition to believe what is so devoutly wished—namely, that the Church of Rome is on the eve of an eventful crisis, which, however it may be predicted by Vicars Apostolic, or desired by Romish Priests, will not be brought about by Episcopal prophecies, or Sacerdotal good wishes, alone.

I observe, Sir, that even you tacitly give up the defence of the Romish Hierarchy in Ireland, on the point of LOYALTY, but I think, I have a right to complain of your silence on this head, as a part of the *suppressio veri*, which some have thought to be near a kin to the *suggestio falsi*. Either you think, with most other men, that the Irish Priesthood is not to be trusted ; in which case it becomes perfect wildness to recommend “ Emancipation,” (as it is termed) or else you consider them worthy of confidence, and by omitting to avow that opinion, have done them a great injustice.

I am Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

AMICUS PROTESTANS.

LETTER IX.

SIR,

I return from my *decursus* on the increased numbers, and growing confidence of the Roman Catholics, both in England, and Ireland, and proceed with the examination of your Third Letter.—You affirm, that Public opinion sustains the

Roman Catholic Bills, and *will never cease to act till their object is carried*; for the People of England, you say, are too thoroughly Protestant, to believe civil disabilities, and exclusions, essential to the security of their Religion. This opinion, however, you consider to go along with the Catholics, only so far as equal civil claims are concerned—and you conceive, that so far from obtaining any additional hold on public opinion by carrying the measure, they would be deprived, by their success, of what they at present possess, as we should then cease to regard them with sympathy, as the victims of anti-social oppression, defended (as you state) by ambiguous, and untenable, propositions; and we should contemplate them only as the professors of a very silly, and mischievous, scheme of theology, which had lost its empire over the mind, and was slowly dying away before the joint influence of the gradual advances of knowledge, and the exhibition of a purer faith.

It is a favourite theme with the friends of Roman Catholic Emancipation—that it must be carried one day or other, and it is certain, that if they could once persuade us to think so too, the Roman Catholics would have little left to accomplish, since there is no argument so perfectly enervating, as the belief that an opponent must carry his object, in spite of all our efforts. I have already adverted to an ancient example of the consequences of such reasoning as this, which is left on record for our admonition; “And David said in his heart, “I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul—there is “nothing better for me, than that I should speedily escape “into the land of the Philistines.” We have here a specimen of the union of fear and folly, and indeed, they generally go together. The succours of religion and reason being both withdrawn, for a season, even the Man after God’s own heart, concludes that his enemies are so powerful, as to render all resistance hopeless; and therefore, that the only thing left is to throw himself at once into their arms! Now this is not the way in which England reasoned, when BUONAPARTE, after desolating nearly the whole of Europe, threatened us,

in our turn, with immediate ruin ; and I hope it is not the way in which Protestants will reason now, notwithstanding the increasing strength, and activity, of Papists. If we remain but true to ourselves, we have no cause for despondency, or alarm. There is no pretence for our throwing up the game, with all our pieces on the board ; and indeed, our adversaries are so sensible of the impossibility of effecting their object, except through the medium of our own folly, that they modestly invite us to betray ourselves, and to commit a sort of suicide upon our own Political existence ; for such would be the inevitable consequence of believing that we are bound to surrender at discretion, because we cannot eventually hold out. You represent " the People of England," however, as too thoroughly Protestant, to believe civil disabilities, and exclusions, essential to the security of their Religion. Now, if by " the People of England," you mean the mere numerical majority, I answer, that this is not " the People of England," either in Religion, or in Politics ; since, according to SENECA, " Argumentum turpissimum est Turba." If however, you intend that intelligent, sober, and discreet, portion of the community, which may be fairly, and legitimately, understood by the term, it will then be necessary to define what you mean by the far more equivocal phrase, " the security of Religion," because, although I should hope that, while in a theological point of view, no good Protestant supposes his Religion to depend, for its existence and conservation, upon any civil disabilities, or exclusions, imposed upon Papists, I apprehend, that in a subordinate, though still most important, sense, he may be justified, upon every ground of sober argumentation, in believing that the security of PROTESTANTS, (if not the security of their Religion) may, and must mainly depend, under God, upon the disabilities, and exclusions, of Papists. It is thus, I apprehend—to argue analogically—that the friends of Religion and Order, may legitimately put existing laws into force, or call for new ones against Infidelity and Treason, without being charged with entertaining any fears for the cause of Revealed Religion, or for the ultimate triumph of

regular government.—It is not because they feel any doubt that the Truth will eventually prevail, or that they consider the aid of human law to be necessary for the protection of Divine Revelation, but because they wish to preserve the ignorant, and to restrain the vicious—to save the unwary from destruction, and the innocent from contamination—to live in peace themselves, and to provide for the security of others. In like manner, it argues no distrust on the part of the Protestants of England, in the truth of their Religion, and no fears for its security, when, far from calling for any new laws against Papists, they desire only to keep those, which the wisdom of their Ancestors has provided for their common security, against the errors of a Religion of Idolatry, and the encroachments of a Religion of Policy.

With regard to your idea, that the Roman Catholics will lose their hold on public opinion, by obtaining what they seek, inasmuch as they would then no longer retain the sympathy of those persons who now consider them the victims of oppression—I confess myself unable to comprehend, how it can be so desirable for the Protestant Church, and Constitution, to abandon their bulwarks and securities, in order that the Roman Catholics should no longer enjoy the sympathy of those soft-hearted Politicians, who may, after all, be greatly mistaken in suffering their sympathy to run out in that particular direction. Not happening, myself, to feel that the continuance, or even the increase, of this flow of sympathy for the Roman Catholics, is likely to be at all injurious to our Protestant Empire, so long as our present laws shall continue to protect the Church and State, I confess, that I had rather let the Roman Catholics take all the benefit of the sympathy which they at present enjoy, than alter one jot or tittle of the existing laws of exclusion, in order to deprive them of any portion of that sympathy. Let those, Sir, who can gravely designate those laws (as you do) as a system of “anti-social oppression, “defended by ambiguous and untenable propositions,”—let those, I say, surrender them on no better grounds than you assign. There are others, who cannot consent to sacrifice a

certain good for an uncertain theory ; and though they could even be sure, that the ill-directed sympathy of three-fourths of the Population were expending itself in favour of the Roman Catholics, they would rather endeavour to excite the wholesome sympathy of a handful of real Protestants for the remaining fourth of the Empire ; or in the expressive language of Scripture—" to lift up their voice for the residue that is left,"—than lend themselves, for a moment, to perpetuate the popular delusion, by joining in that senseless clamour which has been heard so long for " Catholic Emancipation," Equality of Civil Rights, and Charity all over the world, without its beginning at home.

You assert, however, that when the whole frame of our existing Laws, shall come to be altered, in the manner you propose, we shall then regard the Roman Catholics, as the professors of a very silly and mischievous scheme of theology, which had lost its empire over the mind, and was slowly dying away before the joint influence of the gradual advances of knowledge, and the exhibition of a purer Faith—all which is to suppose Popery only a formidable thing, in proportion as it is kept from place and power, by the operation of restrictive and exclusive Laws ; but how then comes it to flourish and to preserve its " empire over the mind," in Countries where there are no restrictive or exclusive Laws, and where it has the sanction and support of the ruling Government ? You will perhaps answer, that in those cases, there is no countervailing check opposed to it by " the exhibition of a " purer Faith," but can you seriously have brought yourself to believe that the aid which any system of Religion derives from the favour and protection of " the powers that be," is no advantage to it ; and that in proportion as Popery shall receive the encouragement of our own Rulers and Legislators, and be itself raised to the Seats of Legislation, and of Power, it must not, of necessity, acquire an influence which it has never enjoyed since the Reformation ? It is not necessary, I conceive, to the argument of Protestants, that they should demonstrate the certainty of the Romish ascendancy being

established among ourselves, as completely as in those Countries where little, if any, opposition, can arise from the Protestant interest. It is sufficient for them to shew that the danger of the temporary triumph of Popery in England, in consequence of the abandonment of our present safeguards, is by no means slight; while the inevitable inconveniences, and evils, of the proposed changes, by means of the conflicts and struggles which must necessarily arise, (whether Popery shall be eventually successful or not), are abundantly sufficient to induce caution, and rather to recommend the continuance of our present policy, than the desperate adventure which is proposed to us. In vain, if the projected changes should take place, will the Protestants go on reasoning, in order to convert the Roman Catholics, or proceed with "the exhibition of a purer Faith," for the purpose of overthrowing their "silly and mischievous scheme of Theology," Popery will laugh at such puny means of annoyance, so long as she can lawfully invest the Throne with her Counsel, assume the Fasces of authority, and occupy the Seats of Legislation.

The hope that Popery will lose its empire morally, in proportion as it shall increase its empire politically, appears unreasonable in the extreme, and wholly at war with the result of our experience in all similar cases. This notion of yours is in close alliance with the kindred sentiment propounded by Mr. WILBERFORCE, namely, that in the very degree in which the Romish Priests of Ireland, shall acquire the increased power of doing mischief, they will in that precise proportion, be less mischievous than before! but as I have already examined that opinion in its place, I may perhaps be excused from enlarging here on a proposition of a kindred character.

You next arrive at the hardy assertion, that the measure of Roman Catholic Emancipation, gives the Roman Catholics *no new power*, but merely allows an existing power to be exercised in an open and Constitutional manner. So then it is *no new power* to Advise the Crown—to form a part both of the Legislative and Executive Estate—to occupy the Seats of Jurisdiction, and of the Magistracy—to preside as Lord Lieu-

tenants, and Sheriffs of Counties—and to sit upon the Juries of the Land—to exercise sway over our distant Dependancies and Colonies, [Take INDIA for one !] To distribute Ecclesiastical Patronage ; and to award Civil Promotion. All this it seems is no new power. Really, Sir, if this be not a new power, and such an one as has been hitherto unattained by the Roman Catholics, and the acquisition of which, would a few years since, have been despaired of by them, words should seem to have lost their meaning. If this be not a new power, for what are they making the mighty stir we at present witness ? They themselves form a very different estimate of the boon which they *demand*. I use the word advisedly, for they *solicit* it no longer, and whenever any thing less is offered them, than the grant of new power, they refuse the concession, as falling below their expectations, and defrauding their hopes.

You now quit, for a season, the turbid atmosphere of Politics, and advert to the Religious part of the question, affirming that whatever opinion you may entertain of the speculative tenets of your Catholic Brother, you dare not punish him for entertaining them, or enact that he shall change, or profess, to change them, as the price of the enjoyment of *the ordinary civil privileges of his Country*. I think I have a right to complain, that this question is not fairly stated, because when you speak of the ordinary civil privileges of the Country, you evidently intend, the right of bearing a share in the Government, since the Roman Catholic already enjoys, all ordinary civil privileges short of this, and therefore, the integrity of your own argument requires that it should be so understood. This, of course, supposes every man, whether his Religious Profession be manifestly injurious, or not, to that of the existing Government in Church and State, to possess a natural and indefeasible claim to the right of administering that Government, in common with those who profess the Religion of the State, and owe no Foreign allegiance ; and could this postulatam be once admitted, no doubt you would make good your inference, that a refusal of this right is a species of punishment, and persecution. I dispute, how-

ever, the validity of your premises, and should I succeed in overturning the substratum of your reasoning, I apprehend that the superstructure must fall of course.

You appear, Sir, to entertain a notion that Power is a matter of property, and that a man is as much entitled to a share in the Government, as he is to be the holder of lands or goods. The repeated appeals which you make to justice, as well as to policy, in respect of the inalienable rights of our Roman Catholic Subjects, remind us of the exploded doctrine of the inalienable rights of Man; and, perhaps, if the current of Public opinion did not set a different way at present, we might expect to find as pathological claims made upon our philanthropy, in favour of those equal rights which were once so loudly trumpeted, as are now made upon our "sympathy," in favour of another grand experiment equally revolutionary in its character, and equally perilous in its consequences. The fact is, that Power is not such an affair of common property as to render the exclusion from the great offices of State, and from other high and responsible trusts, so serious a grievance as it is represented to be. It is argued indeed that these persons are deprived of the most precious and valuable rights; whereas, if the exclusion be necessary for the preservation of the Constitution (as I, and others, believe and maintain it to be), it is, in point of fact, beneficial to the very persons who are thus loud in their clamours for its repeal. Every one must know that it is often expedient to take power out of the hands of the People, for their own advantage, and lest they should abuse it to their destruction. Every time that a qualification for office is imposed upon Protestants, a variety of incapacities and exclusions are necessarily created, and yet who talks of this as an injustice? How many Protestants, nay, how large a proportion of the Protestant population, are cut off from sitting in our Protestant Parliament, simply because they have not Three-hundred a year of landed property? And yet there are multitudes, who from their place in society, although perhaps eminently qualified in all other respects, must as certainly live and die without ever ob-

taining the necessary qualification, as if some insurmountable obstacle of conscience were to stand in the way of their obtaining it. There are, however, others found properly qualified to fill these offices—the Country is served; and no man thinks of deploring his hard fate, because he cannot be a Member of Parliament; for he is assured that if he did, instead of obtaining any “sympathy,” every body would laugh at him. He might as well expect people to pity him, because he was not born a Peer of the Realm. The simple question in any case is, are there *good grounds* for exclusion? For if there be, the restriction is not only legal, but equitable and just. Strictly speaking, says an able reasoner on this subject, no man has a *right* to the Government of others, not even they who are in possession of it. It is a *trust*, and a most sacred one; it is a *duty* imposed upon them by the Almighty, which they are bound to discharge with uprightness and fidelity, “as they that must give account.” It is, in truth, cast upon them by His Providence; and what alone the generality of mankind are entitled to, is the due and regular Administration of Government, that it should be ordered with impartiality, and a strict regard to justice. In the present imperfect state of our nature, it has been found conducive to this end, to devise, and impose, certain checks upon the Rulers. In this Country, this has been effected by giving to the people, through the medium of Representatives, a share in the Legislature, and a certain controul, or superintendence, over the administration of public affairs. But this is not for the private advantage of the individuals who exercise it, but for the common benefit of all; and they, therefore, who give no vote for Members of Parliament, consider themselves as enjoying, and do, in fact, enjoy the blessings of the British Constitution, as fully as they who do, or even as they who sit in the House of Commons.

To argue then that Roman Catholics, merely because they are ineligible, in a Protestant State, to Offices of the highest Trust, are enduring a deplorable bondage, from which it is at once the duty, and the interest, of Protestants to “emanci-

pute" them, is to hold a language which, but for its frequent recurrence, would be deemed irrational, and ridiculous; and such as I will venture to say, would not have been endured for the first half Century from the period of the English Revolution. The disadvantage complained of (for at the utmost, it is no more), is one inseparable from the profession which the Roman Catholics have chosen to adopt. They have subjected themselves to engagements which materially affect, and interfere with, their allegiance to their Sovereign, or which (to take the lowest ground), have been for nearly a Century and a half, believed by the Legislature, and the Country, to do so: and upon themselves must lie the *onus probandi* of shewing that the reasons which led to their exclusion have entirely lost their force—in other words, that they no longer owe a Foreign Allegiance, and that they disclaim all right to persecute their Fellow Subjects, as Heretics, and Schismatics. The tenets still held by the Roman Catholics, and never disavowed, or renounced by them, are not, as you represent them, merely "speculative tenets;" such indeed they might be, in reference to ourselves, if they had regard only to another world; but *Agitur de Republicâ*—the secular character of the Romish Creed has an especial reference to, and bearing upon, "the life that now is," and until the practical mischief which is mixed up with these "speculative tenets," be withdrawn, "the voice," may be "the voice of Jacob, "but the hands are the hands of Esau." For these reasons, I affirm that the refusal of the Romish Claims, does not deserve to be assimilated, by you, to the conduct of that sanguinary impostor MAHOMET, who sought (to use your own words) to propagate his sensual and dissolute deism by the sword; and I contend that it is highly indecent, publicly to charge it (as you expressly do) upon Protestants, who only wish to keep the Constitution of their Country unimpaired, that it is not less absurd and criminal for them to seek to extend Protestantism by Act of Parliament, than it was for Mahomet to seek to propagate his imposture by the sword. I shall not, Sir, attempt to prove that such a charge is per-

fectly untenable, but will simply content myself with noticing it, and shall then leave it to the fate which I think must attend it.

Of a piece with this reasoning, is the whole concluding part of your Third Letter, which is now under examination.—You make no distinction between that regard for our ancient laws, which is founded upon a love for the Constitution, as it stands, and that bitter and persecuting spirit, which drives the subjects of its vengeance to Apostacy, or Hypocrisy—you charge it upon us, as Protestants, that in refusing to the Roman Catholics the right of participating in the Government, we are waging war with their Religion, and are ourselves guilty of all the intolerance, and uncharitableness, which we impute to them. You contend, that the attempt to put down the errors of Popery by the use of the civil power, and the infliction of any kind of Political suffering is absurd, inconsistent, and useless: but while I readily admit that all these, and still stronger epithets, would belong to such a line of conduct, I must deny, for the reasons I have already stated, that they have the least application to the course we have actually pursued, in refusing the Roman Catholic Claims.

I profess myself unable to comprehend, how the second introduction of LUTHER into the service of your argument will avail you. It is indeed most true, as you state, that he maintained the cardinal doctrine of "Justification by Faith," by spiritual and scriptural arguments, and it is equally true, that it pleased God to bless his exertions, in the highest degree, to His own Glory, to the good of His Church, and to the conviction and confusion of the Idolatry and Paganism of the Church of Rome; all this is undoubtedly true—but unless you could shew that LUTHER, if the opportunity had been presented to him, would have been likely to take your side of the question, and to recommend a Protestant Nation, and Parliament, to let in the Roman Catholics, after turning them out; with the same facility as one Pope has restored the Order of Jesuits, after another Pope had abolished it, I do not see how LUTHER's support of "Justification by Faith,"

will help you. To my mind, the fact of that great Reformer having struggled so strenuously against the *doctrinal* corruptions of the Church of Rome, affords the best evidence that he would not have sanctioned the *political* exaltation of such a corrupt Church, nor approved any attempts to bring such a system into credit, or power, in a Protestant state, whether by Sermons in the Pulpit, Speeches in the Senate, or Letters in the Public Newspapers. I may be mistaken, but I imagine those Protestants to be the most consistent admirers of LUTHER, who, without feeling a wish to hurt a hair of the heads of Roman Catholics, (which God forbid), would yet desire to keep them where they are, as the best place both for them, and ourselves. I may have formed a mistaken estimate of that illustrious Reformer's mind, but I imagine that he would have perished at a stake, before he would have held up one of his hands for "Catholic Emancipation," as it is perversely called. If, Sir, it be said that what LUTHER might, or might not, have done at present, can only be question of probability, I admit it; but you will see that it is yourself who, in forcing that distinguished Man into the arena of this controversy, *volens, volens*, have first raised the question of probability, by supposing, that because he argued so well against Popery, he would, had he lived till now, have trusted to the efficacy of argument alone, and have let the Papists into Place and Power, in full confidence, that by the force of his reasoning, he could have talked them out again, whenever he chose. Now to this probability, thus mooted by yourself, I oppose his whole life of labour against "the rulers of the darkness of this world"—and against "spiritual wickedness in high places;" and I contend, with at least an equal chance of being in the right, that he would not have argued, as the friends of Emancipation do, for raising all this worldly darkness into rule, or for putting so much spiritual wickedness into high place.

It appears equally beside the real merits of this question, to argue, as you do, that "the restrictions on the Roman Catholics are not required to prop the doctrines of our

"Faith," or that "the Church of England depends upon these exclusive Laws;" indeed this is only to clothe in other terms, the proposition which you have already advanced respecting these Laws, and the designs of their framers, and advocates. The doctrines of the Protestant Faith no more require a prop from any human Laws, than do the precepts of our common morality—but the PROFESSORS of that Faith undoubtedly require, and demand, protection, in the profession of Faith which they are making; and the whole frame of the British Constitution, as it stands, supposes that protection to be indispensable, and secures it accordingly to its Protestant members. In like manner, it is no disparagement to the doctrine of Ethics, that we should require human Laws for the conservation of morality; and while he would be thought a clumsy Legislator, who should trust to the mere operation of the divine sanction which promulgated the precepts of morality; it would never be imputed to him, that in consulting the interests of Society, by enactments which might not possibly be always palatable to all parties, he intended to "prop the doctrine" of Morals, by the aid of restrictive Laws.

The Church of England, so far as her Spiritual character is concerned, owes nothing to the Laws of restriction, against which you so severely inveigh; but so far as she partakes in her character of a Political Institution, she needs these Laws for her security, as much as when they were first enacted. You represent it, indeed, as the "sarcasm of Dissent," that "the Church depends upon these exclusive Laws;" but the better taught among the Dissenters are much too wise to indulge in this "sarcasm," for they know that if the Dissenters were at this moment at the head of affairs, instead of the Church, even they, as well as ourselves, would require the protection of restrictive Laws, and must continue to require it, so long as any Confession of Faith, which they may adopt, or any Catechism, which they may teach, shall be found in opposition to the Decrees of the Council of Trent; and so long as any portion of the Secular Constitution (no matter what that Constitution may be) shall continue friendly to Civil

Liberty, and Religious Toleration, or opposed to Ecclesiastical Tyranny, and Arbitrary Power.

Such of my readers as may not have met with your Letters, will, probably, hardly believe me, when I assure them, that in the warmth of your heart towards the ill-fated Roman Catholics, you conclude this Third Letter, by actually "recommending to the great and enlightened body of our NATIONAL CLERGY, to yield their full and generous sanction to the measure of concession, and to abandon their subordinate, and practically unavailing, fences—convinced that such a course would enable the Church of England to take a moral position, still higher than she has ever yet occupied, from which eminence, she might bid defiance to all the efforts which might be made against her." For myself, Sir, I am a little apprehensive of the consequences of any great body mounting to this pinnacle of the temple, lest perchance their heads should begin to swim, and, I therefore prefer to see the National Clergy in the safe and unostentatious position which they have so long occupied; and although you, more than once, express your anxiety for the continued well-being both of the Church and State, under their present Protestant Regimen, I think you may spare yourself all this morbid state of feeling, when you recollect the reproof which LUTHER once gave to your old namesake, MELANCTHON, when he was exercising himself in matters that were too high for him—"MONENDUS EST PHILIPPUS UT DESINAT ESSE RECTOR MUNDI."

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

AMICUS PROTESTANS.

LETTER X.

SIR,

I now arrive at your Fourth Letter, but am happy to find, for the sake of my Readers, to say nothing of myself, that so small portion of it has already been fully examined, in my an-

swers to those which preceded it. Passing over, therefore, not a little that here presents itself in a varied form of phraseology, although without the least originality of matter, I first wish to set you right where you represent me, as affirming that: "the Toleration of Popery must inevitably promote its growth," by reminding my Readers that I have no where asserted this, even by implication, nor have I any where objected to the Toleration of Popery. It is now tolerated to the fullest extent, as is every species of Dissent, by our Tolerant Church; and may she never cease to tolerate the grossest corruptions of Popery, as well as the more harmless, and venial, errors of Dissent. Such Toleration; however, neither implies, nor involves, the grant of Ecclesiastical, or Political Power, to Popery or Dissent; nor yet the concession of such claims preferred by either; as may enable the one or the other to help themselves to Power of any kind. I have, however, already so fully pointed out the essential difference between tolerating a corrupt or mistaken creed, and investing it with authority and rule, that I may perhaps be excused for doing more at present than merely adverting to the distinction which must ever subsist between these two things.

Assuming thus, that my object is to annihilate Popery, by ceasing to tolerate it, you argue well from erroneous premises, and contend that the way to get rid of an absurd sect is to let it alone, as GAMALIEL did, and that Witchcraft, formerly, and the delusion of *Joanna Southcott*, latterly, were not abolished by burning, or putting in the stocks. The fallacy of this mode of reasoning will easily appear.—It supposes such a method of extinguishing Popery, as no Protestant, in his senses, ever contemplated; and it supposes Popery to claim what it has already obtained, namely, to be "let alone," whereas it really claims what it has not obtained, namely, to be put into pre-eminence and power—neither is your mode of designating Popery, at all more happy than your account of its object, for what will the Right Reverend Bishops, and Vicars Apostolic, who are so much obliged by your advocating their pretensions, think of your calling the *Holy Roman Apostolic Church*—immutable and infallible.—

A SECT ? Leaving you, however, to settle this matter with your new allies, as you may be able, it is clear that the Roman Catholics are not simply, as you state, an *absurd* Sect, although it be true that no Religion was ever palmed upon Mankind which contains in it more absurdity. It should rather be called an ambitious, worldly-minded, intolerant, and sanguinary Profession of Faith, which prescribes and anathematizes every other, over which it has power, than merely "an *absurd* Sect." In order to establish the slightest analogy between the case of Witchcraft, or Enthusiasm, and that of Popery, you must shew that Witchcraft and Enthusiasm have claimed admission to places of influence in the Senate, and power in the State ; nor will this avail you, unless you can further prove that Popery is as harmless a thing as Sorcery, or Southcotism, and, consequently, that the claims of one and all of these Religions (true or false) standing upon an equal footing, their Professors may be safely permitted to carry the fasces, and wield the sword in this Protestant Empire. Until your reasoning embraces all these points, it will not avail you to argue that because Ancient Witchcraft, and Modern Schism, are full of absurdity, therefore, that Popery, which is both mischievous and dangerous, as well as absurd, ought to succeed in preferring such claims to Political Power, as no other erroneous system, old or new, ever dreamt of preferring at all. It will avail you nothing to be thus producing examples of mere delusion, when the impotency of the Agents who exhibit them, is as manifest as their folly. Prove that Popery is as impotent in power, as it is absurd in character, and you may take something by your motion.—As Mr. Sheridan once observed of a story, that it might be a very good one, but only wanted an application to the matter in hand, so your illustration cannot apply to the subject before us, unless we suppose a number of infatuated persons desiring to invest Witchcraft with supreme authority, or to make Joanna Southcote the Queen of England ; and even then, the illustration will not go on all fours, unless you can prove, in addition, that no more apprehensions are to be entertained from Popery in power, than from Witchcraft and Enthusiasm when placed in the same situation.

Your next object, in this Letter, is to prove that Persecution endears the opinions of Men to them, and makes them cling to those opinions with far greater tenacity—a proposition which I believe no Protestant will dispute—and having already demonstrated to your own satisfaction, that the denial of Civil Privileges to the Roman Catholics, is positive Persecution, and nothing short of it, you thence argue that the Persecution with which we are now overwhelming the unhappy Roman Catholics, by the denial of Civil Privileges, can only tend to the promotion of Popery, instead of its diminution, I need hardly here stop to repeat that, agreeing most cordially with that part of this syllogism which supposes Persecution to defeat its own object; it is yet evident that our determination to preserve our own Laws and Privileges, by the refusal of Power to the Romanists, deserves not in any way to be branded with the odious name of Persecution; and I, therefore, think that all the reasoning which is built upon the premises propounded by you, must fall at once to the ground.

But you again enquire, what has the Religion of the Roman Catholics to do with their “purely Civil Claims,” and you answer your own interrogatory by affirming that their Religion is no more in question, than “the geology of the Moon.” “Is vain,” (you add) “is it alledged that they are bad Theologians—it might as well be objected to them that they are bad Mathematicians, or indifferent Poets, or that their taste in the Fine Arts, is not so pure as might be wished. They have an undoubted right to believe as much nonsense as they please, and we have no right, on that account, to despoil them of that Political inheritance which the Constitution of the Country, ascertains to them in common with their Fellow Subjects.”

Now with regard to “the Constitution of the Country,” and the “Political Inheritance,” which you suppose it to secure to the Roman Catholics, I have met this part of the subject so fully in my Third Letter to yourself, that any more argument upon that particular point, would seem to be superfluous here; but as the main reason against the Romish

Claims, is the nature and character of their Religion, and as every conclusion you have formed, (in spite of much profession in favour of the purer system of Protestants) can leave no doubt of your entertaining (in common with mere Politicians) a very imperfect sense of the character of the Romish Creed, and an equally inadequate notion of the bearing of that Creed upon this most solemn and vital question; I must be excused for enlarging a little upon this part of your Fourth Letter. In reference then to your enquiry, what has the Roman Catholic Religion to do with the Claims? I answer,—“ much every way,”—and quite as much as it had, when the principal lights both of the English Reformation, and Revolution, protested against it, as the greatest corruption of Vital Christianity, which had ever been known to the world, and therefore wholly unfit to usurp an empire over either the consciences, the persons, the liberty, or the property of Protestants—and of course disqualified, in an equal degree, for fabricating; or administering, the Laws of a Protestant Commonwealth.

There is no period of the History of Popery, either in this or any other Country, when she has not affected Secular Dominion, and sought to take the lead in the Political concerns of Empires; nor any one in which she has ceased to prove that Carnal Policy, and the Lust of Power, were the main springs of all her movements—When power has been acquired by her over Protestants, a bigotted intolerance at best, but more commonly, a sanguinary cruelty has invariably followed; and if, notwithstanding the letters of blood in which this awful truth is written, either you, or Mr. WILBERFORCE, should still refuse your assent to it, resolve to suppress all notice of it, or attach no importance to it, this will not alter the fact itself, nor render either the scepticism, the silence, or the indifference, of the Protestant Advocates of the Romish Claims a whit more creditable to them.

I apprehend, then, that it cannot “ as well be objected,” to the Roman Catholics, that they are “ bad Mathematicians “ and indifferent Poets,” as that they are “ bad Theologians,”

because erroneous diagrams, and doggrel verses, can do as injury to the Church or the State, whereas the unscriptural doctrines of the Council of Trent, the cruel anathema's of the Papal Throne and Court, and the intrigues of Jesuits, Priests, and Inquisitors, in every part of Christendom, and in every age, are more formidable than either vile Poetry; false Propositions, or bad Taste—even supposing it could be shewn that bad Mathematicians, indifferent Poets, and Persons devoid of Taste, evinced as keen an appetite for Empire; and were as likely to obtain it, as the Roman Catholics.

Your general professions of attachment to the Protestant Church, and your occasional declarations against the Popish Church, cannot blind our eyes to the palpable fact, that you consider the most corrupt of all Religions to be little, if at all, worse in a State, than certain erroneous conditions of mind, where Religion has no concern, as, for instance, in the case to which you advert, of Mathematics, Poetry, and Taste; but is it possible, Sir, that you can seriously think, that the "nonsense," (to use your own word), which may be believed upon subjects of a philosophical, or literary nature, and the "nonsense," which is believed by the Papists, are one and the same, and that in their consequences, as well as in their natures, one of these nonsensical things is identical with the other? Would bad Mathematicians, or foolish Poets, have lighted the fires of Smithfield, opened the Prisons of the Inquisition, or restored the Order of the Jesuits? Do these Mathematicians and Poets now refuse the Bible to the World, and the Cup to the Laity? Do they forge Miracles, promulgate False and Idolatrous Doctrines, and sanction a worldly and venal system of Ethics? Do they pronounce better Mathematicians and Poets than themselves, to be so many Heretics, unfit for Toleration on Earth, and out of the possibility of Salvation hereafter; and do they maintain, that although their own bad Mathematics, and indifferent Poetry, are thus found in alliance with far worse qualities—they have still an undoubted and indefeasible right to give the law to the very men whom they cannot cease to abhor, and whom they have

repeatedly declared (on the highest authority) they never will begin to tolerate?

I will now endeavour to shew that the "Bad Theologians" of Popery, are somewhat worse than either bad Mathematicians, indifferent Poets, or People of inferior Taste, and my inference will then be, first, that such a system of darkness and crime, is unfit for rule in this Protestant Nation—and secondly, that Religious Men among ourselves are without excuse in endeavouring to set up this detestable system, either Religiously or Politically.

The ABSOLUTIONS, INDULGENCES, PENANCES, and FASTS of the Romish Church, and especially her doctrine of PURGATORY, are so many Papal, and Sacerdotal, Licences for Sin.—If a man, or any set of men, may, under colour of a commission from Heaven, absolve from punishment for vices that are past, or sanction the perpetration of vices to be committed—if mortification of the body, may atone for the sin of the soul; and abstinence from particular food, may take rank among the essential duties of Religion—if men are to be taught that, however they may live, they may yet be saved by BAPTISM, or EXTREME UNCTION; or redeemed, when dead, by Obituary Masses, and the Prayers of others, from a state of being, respecting the existence of which, the Holy Scriptures afford no evidence; what can be expected to result from such radical errors, but a system of relaxed morality, or rather of actual immorality, which is entirely at variance with that internal piety which constitutes the very essence of vital Christianity.—"That Religion," (says BURNET,) "is
 " chiefly designed for perfecting the nature of man, for improving his faculties, governing his actions, and securing
 " the peace of every man's conscience, and of the societies of
 " mankind in common, is a truth so plain, that, without further arguing about it, all will agree to it. Every part of
 " Religion is then to be judged by its relation to the main
 " ends of it; and since the Christian Doctrine was revealed
 " from Heaven, as the most perfect and proper way that ever
 " was, for the advancing the good of mankind, nothing can

"and every thing which they meant to do, would not be credible, if it were not proved by the fact. This circumstance rendered the Clergy, masters of the secrets of every family: it rendered them the universal advisers: when any person's intentions were laid before a Clergyman, it was his business to explain what was lawful, and what was not, and under this pretext, to give what counsel he pleased: in this manner, the Clergy became masters of the whole system of human life; the two objects they chiefly pursued were, to increase the riches of the Order, and to gratify their senses, and pride: by using all their arts to cajole the great and wealthy, and attacking them in moments of weakness, of sickness, and at the hour of death, they obtained great and numerous bequests to the Church: by abusing the opportunities they enjoyed with women, they indulged their lusts; and by the direction they obtained in the management of every family, and every event, they exercised their love of power, when they could not draw an accession of wealth." See MILLIN'S Translation of VILLERS, on the Reformation p. 100.

I may next advert to the danger arising to a Protestant State, from their holding the tenets of THE LAWFULNESS OF REGICIDE; and THE DUTY OF PERSECUTING PROTESTANTS. It was a Rector of the Catholic Church, in Paris, that first encouraged the design of *Barriere*, upon the life of HENRY IV. concealed the Treason from the Government, and sent the Traitor to be trained to his purpose. Hence also, when the Jesuits, Garnett, Gerard, Townsend, Boudoin, and Mall, had contrived the horrid Tragedy of the 5th of November, they found instruments fitted to their hands, in Catesby, Widd, de Abbeville, Rookwood, and Fowles; NO ONE OF WHOM, HOWEVER, WAS A JESUIT, BUT MERELY OF THE SAME CHURCH. The influence of Catesby, who was a Catholic Priest, gave the minds of the Lay-Conspirators was very much affected, and the Jesuits, Fowles and Rookwood having publicly declared, after their execution, that it was from their strong attachment to him, that they had at

first been led to entertain the project. [State Trials, vol. ii. p. 186.]

Such, in these instances, (among innumerable others) was the conduct of the Catholic Priesthood, and such was the influence of that Priesthood on the Laity. The system of each remaining the same; the inference is, that Catholic Priests must continue to be the Agents of the Jesuits, and that the Catholic Laity will continue their devoted submission to the Priesthood, at the expence of the Protestant Nation, which invites them to Privilege, and Power.

The doctrine of PAPAL INFALLIBILITY, is not yet renounced by any Council of the Church of Rome, although it derives no support from the errors which the Popes have committed; and the vices in which they have indulged: while that of FOREIGN SPIRITUAL SUPREMACY, however opposed to what true Patriots can admit with safety to their Country, is still claimed by the Head of the Romish Church, and fully secured by the Roman Catholic Relief Bills, last offered to the British Parliament!

It is unnecessary that I should here enumerate the other corrupt doctrines, and practices, to which I have adverted, in my Fourth Letter to Mr. WILBERFORCE; but with regard to the present state of the Foreign Clergy of that Church, I shall extract a piece of information from DUVAL'S *Tableaux de Naples*, published in Paris, in 1821.—“La conduite du bas Clergé à Naples est souvent scandaleuse. On voit dans les rues de Naples, mais surtout dans les Caffés, des Pretres en habits sales et déchirés, s'approcher des Etrangers, et otant d'une main leur calotte, demander de l'autre, l'aumône.—Quelque fois c'est pis encore: ils proposent aux nouveaux débarqués, de les conduire dans des Maisons de plaisir.”—I would also once more refer to Mr. PINKERTON, who, in reference to the immorality of the Romish Clergy, observes of those in the South of Europe, “The Monks being extremely numerous, and human passions ever the same, those Ascetics atone for the want of marriage, by the practice of Adultery, and the Husbands, from the dread of the Inquisition, are constrained to connive at this enormous abuse.” Again,—“It

" may perhaps be asserted that the Roman Catholic system in the South of Europe, is the only Superstition in the Universe, which has at any period necessitated the practice of vice; thus confirming the maxim that the corruption of the purest and best system, is always the worst. Were an Apostle again to visit Spain, he would certainly begin with preaching the Christian practice, as if the very idea of Christianity had perished, and his first duty would be, to CONVERT THE ECCLESIASTICS." Again, speaking of France, he says, " The Laws and decency of Marriage are frequently sacrificed, and the looseness of the French morals, in regard to the Female Sex, has become proverbial." And further, " The Religion of FRANCE, was the Roman Catholic, till the Revolution established freedom of conscience, OR RATHER GAVE AN UNDUE ASCENDANCY TO CONCEALED ATHEISM, WHICH ANY SUPERSTITION REMARKABLY ABSURD HAS A TENDENCY TO PRODUCE. But the strongest minds, as usual—remained deistical."—PINKERTON's Geography. Now, without endeavouring to strike the balance between Atheism and Deism, it is by this time pretty well agreed that, a deplorable corruption existed on the Continent before the French Revolution; and that, in the righteous judgment of God, even an Infidel Philosophy was permitted to become the scourge of the perverted Faith, and criminal practices, which had taken the place of all true Religion and Virtue. It is a necessary consequence of the superstitious abuse of Religion, and of the excess to which such an abuse may be carried, that Religion itself falls into universal disrepute; and is commonly replaced by Atheism, Libertinism, and the contempt of all Laws, divine and human. " What more potent," (says GALE) " to make men Atheists, than such a ridiculous, superstitious, Religion, as that of the Man of sin. Carnal policy, which is the quintessence of Popery, naturally tends to Atheism."—Court of the Gentiles, part 3. p. 228.

I add, only Three Authorities more—which are such as Mr. WILBERFORCE will not dispute—the late Rev. Mr. SCOTT,

when remarking, in his "Force of Truth," upon what he calls
 "those pestilent errors that have in all ages corrupted and
 "enervated the pure and powerful doctrine of the Gospel;
 "which lead to forgetfulness of God, and security in sin, and
 "are deadly poison to every soul that imbibes them unless a
 "miracle of grace prevent,"—adds—"Such are all the Super-
 "stitious doctrines of Popery, Purgatory, Penances, Absolu-
 "tions, Indulgences, Merits of good Works, and the Accept-
 "ableness of uncommanded observances; *what* [says he] *are*
 "these but engines of THE DEVIL, to keep men quiet in their
 "sins?"

The late Rev. Mr. CECIL observes. "It is perhaps, impos-
 "sible, in the very nature of things, that such another
 "scheme as Popery could be invented. It is, in truth, *the*
 "Mystery of Iniquity: able to work itself into the Simple,
 "Grand, Sublime, Holy Institutions of Christianity; and so
 "to interweave its abominations with the Truth, as to occupy
 "the strongest passions of the soul, and to controul the
 "strongest understandings! While PASCAL can speak of Po-
 "pery as he does, its influence over the mass of the people
 "can excite no surprise. Those two master principles—That
 "we must believe as the Church ordains," and, That "there
 "is no salvation out of this Church,"—oppose, in the ignorance
 "and fear which they beget—an almost insuperable barrier
 "against the Truth. Popery was the master-piece of SATAN—
 "I believe him utterly incapable of such another contrivance.
 "It was a systematic, and infallible, plan for forming mana-
 "cles, and mufflers, for the human mind. It was a well-laid
 "design to render Christianity contemptible, by the abuse of
 "its principles, and its institutions. It was formed to over-
 "whelm—to enchant—to sit as *the great Whore, making the*
 "*Earth drunk with her fornications.*"

The Rev. Mr. SIMON, in his *Hours Homileticæ*, (Vol. 2. p.
 216.) observes, "It is scarcely to be conceived to what a
 "degree Superstition will blind the eyes of men. There is
 "nothing so absurd or incredible, which a person under the
 "influence of it, is not ready to believe. Who would imagine,

“ that persons could be brought to believe the infallibility of
 “ the Pope, and the power of the Popish Priests to forgive
 “ sin? Who would suppose that any persons should be
 “ brought to believe that a Priest is able to convert bread and
 “ wine into the body and soul, yea, and into the Godhead
 “ also, of Christ; and that every individual who partakes of
 “ that bread and wine, eats and drinks the whole body, the
 “ whole soul, and the whole Godhead of Christ? Yet these
 “ things are credited by millions of persons, as firmly as they
 “ believe that there is a God.”

I have now adverted to some, though but a small portion of the Pollution, both in Doctrine and Practice, which is to derive credit and consequence, in Protestant England, from the exertions of yourself, of Mr. WILBERFORCE, and of other good men, who now solicit us for our Charity, with all the delicate importunity of the armed Beggars in *Gil Blas*, and forcibly intreat us—against the evidence of our senses, and the conviction of our consciences—to give currency to such corruptions, by putting their Professors into power, as the only means left for our own preservation and existence!

I have designated this hasty sketch as portraying only “ a small portion,” of the evil in question, because you are well aware that a volume must be written, to convey any adequate idea of various doctrinal errors of the Romish Church, upon which I have not so much as touched, but in reference to which, as to those which I have noticed, it may fairly be asked of the Religious Professors of the Reformed Church, how they can imagine that by their present inconsiderate conduct they are obeying the Divine injunction.—“ Come out of her my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins—and that ye receive not of her plagues”—an admonition implying that the very mingling with such an Apostate and Anti-Christian Profession of Faith, was a high transgression—a certain way of drinking into the same spirit—and conforming to the same practices.—How does this harmonize with the Apostle’s declaration,—“ We can do nothing against the Truth?”—What is it but to turn the eyes of the Reformed Church, to act over again the part

of MOAB, who seduced Israel to commit fornication? The Gibeonites and other Idolatrous Inhabitants of Canaan, though not admitted to any share in the Jewish Government, were always as thorns in the eyes, and goads in the sides, of the Israelites, by the temptations which they perpetually presented to them to depart from the living God; and are you prepared to say that the danger of learning their ways, and practising their vices, would have been less, had they been admitted to power? You dwell indeed much upon the "*purely Civil Claims*," of the Romanists, as if—they would always be totally unconnected with any thing except what is "*purely Civil*;" but in order to admit a proposition of which you can afford no proof, and for which we can obtain no guarantee, we must dispossess ourselves of all our knowledge of human nature, and all the evidence of History, both Sacred and Secular—nay, we must determine to forget, or despise, the admonitions of the Almighty himself.—It is clear that, in the very nature of things, the Admission of Papists, to almost every office and department of the Executive, and Legislative, Government, must inevitably involve other than "*Civil*" approximation, and assimilation—if not on the part of those Protestants, who are so well taught as Mr. WILBERFORCE and MELANCTHON, yet assuredly on the part of the multitudes who have never possessed their advantages. The line of action which is now proposed to the general body of Protestants, instead of offering an invitation to "*come out*," from Apostate Rome, is only putting into her own mouth the opposite invitation,—"*Cast in thy lot among us—let us all have one purse*."

I propose in my next to illustrate this truth, by a reference to an authority of no mean character.

I am Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

AMICUS PROTESTANS.

LETTER XI.

SIR,

The Author to whom I shall refer, in order to shew that the reception of the doctrines, and the love of the practices, of Popery, even in a Protestant State, are by no means such improbable events as Mr. WILBERFORCE, and yourself, appear to imagine—is the celebrated Dr. OWEN—In his “Brief and Impartial account of the nature of the Protestant Religion,” (lately republished by that truly Protestant Prelate the Bishop of St. David’s), after noticing the opposition which was made by the Heathen world to the first Introduction of Christianity, he observes, “The reason hereof, was, not only
 “the hatred of the truth through the love of sin and unrighteousness, and an ingrafted power of Superstition through
 “blind devotion, but, principally, because for a long tract
 “of time, the whole of the profession of Religion, had been
 “suited to the secular interests of men, supplying them, under various pretences with power, domination, territories,
 “titles, revenues, wealth, ease, grandeur, and honour,
 “with an insinuation into, and power over, the consciences
 “of all sorts of persons; a thing very desirable to men of
 “corrupt minds, and easily turned into an engine, to very
 “bad and pernicious ends. That the whole of the Christian
 “Religion in the Papacy, is framed and fitted to these ends,
 “so as as to give satisfaction to all corrupt and ambitious
 “desires in men, is palpable to all that are not wilfully
 “blind.” “The danger of defection from the profession of
 “the Protestant Religion in the people, must be measured
 “from the preparations for it that are found among them,
 “and the means of their furtherance. Now the vicious habits
 “of the minds of men, incline their affections to take shelter
 “in the Papal Superstition. Such are Ignorance, Lewdness
 “of Conversation, Provocation from the power of Religion in
 “others, Atheism, and Interest, from *hope of advantage pro-*

"posed to some of them who have an influence over others.
 "There can be no defection to Popery in or among the peo-
 "ple, who have ever known any thing of the Protestant Re-
 "ligion, but what proceeds from these causes; which wholly
 "obliterate all sense of its power, all delight in its truth,
 "and dispose men to any thing wherein they hope they may
 "find a better compliance with their inclinations, or at least
 "free them from that whereof they are weary, and wherein
 "they find no advantage. And, the means whereby these
 "things are promoted in them, are want of due instruction;
 "examples of sin, and impunity therein; public discounte-
 "nance of the power of Religion; desire of revenge; and per-
 "sonal and family need, through pride and sensuality. Where
 "these things abound in any Nation, among any people,
 "there is no security of the stability of that profession of
 "Religion, which yet they avow. For all these things will
 "continually operate in their minds, and occasions will not
 "be wanting in the watchful diligence of the Devil and
 "his instruments, to excite and provoke their corrupt lusts
 "to a declension from their profession, which, with many of
 "them, will be carried on gradually and insensibly, until they
 "find themselves ensnared in the Papal interest, beyond
 "what they can extricate themselves out of.

"The Protestant Religion, will not any where long main-
 "tain its station, any otherwise than by an experience of its
 "power and efficacy on the souls of men. Where this is lost,
 "through the power of prevalent vicious habits in the minds
 "of men, the whole of that Religion will be parted with
 "at an easy rate. For there is another continually proposed
 "to them, with these entertainments for men's fancies and
 "carnal affections, with those accommodations for their
 "lusts, living and dying, with outward secular advantages,
 "that the Protestant Religion is not capable of, nor accom-
 "panied with.

"For to what end should men entertain a Religion, which
 "they find no inward spiritual advantages by, and are for the
 "profession of it, exposed to all sorts of outward disad-

“ advantages ? And this sort of men will at any time greedily
 “ embrace such a reconciliation with the Church of Rome,
 “ as, by the terms of it, may a little shelter their reputation,
 “ and make a pretence of satisfying some traditional convictions
 “ of the Truth which they had professed.

“ FORCE, is the next way whereby the same effect may be
 “ produced. And, this is that which those of the Roman interest
 “ do place their principal confidence in ; and, it is that which
 “ they judge they may lawfully make use of, whenever they are
 “ able so to do. Be the force esteemed necessary to this end,
 “ of what sort it will, be it by Private Assassinations, Legal
 “ Persecutions, National Oppressions, Foreign Invasions, all is
 “ alike to them ; they are all of them to be made use of, as
 “ their supposed opportunities require.”

What wonder that under such a view of the Spiritual and
 Temporal dangers of Popery, even where the Protestant Religion
 is publicly professed, and where no doubt can exist as to its
 eventual triumph, (“ for the thing itself,”—says this same
 able Writer—“ will be preserved, in spite of the world,”)—
 what wonder—I say, that under such a view of danger—
 founded on a knowledge of the congruity between Popery,
 and the heart of every Man by nature—this great and good
 man should, in the conclusion of his Book, have suggested
 the importance of “ fervent prayers to ALMIGHTY GOD,
 “ that the Princes and Potentates of the Earth, may have
 “ light to discern that their principal interest in this world,
 “ lies in the preservation of Protestantism.—For although,”
 “ (he adds) “ some reasons that may induce them hereunto,
 “ may not seem of force to them, yet there is one that is
 “ uncontrollable. For where the Protestant Religion is received,
 “ publicly professed, and established by Law, it cannot be
 “ changed, without the extreme havoc and ruin of the greatest
 “ and best part of their subjects, in all their temporal
 “ concerns. And this there is no doubt but that they are
 “ obliged, as far as in them lies, to prevent, as they will
 “ give an account unto GOD, of the Trust reposed in them.
 “ For as things are situated in the world, as the de-

" signs and interests of the parties at variance are formed,
 " it is a madness to suppose that any alteration can be made
 " herein, without those direful effects; and, if they should
 " be covered for a Season, they will break forth afterwards
 " with more rage and fury."

I do not think you more happy in the case, which you instance, of the " Protestant Debtor," and the " Catholic Creditor," than in certain other illustrations which have preceded it.—You suppose this Catholic Creditor coming into a Court of Justice, to complain of a Protestant that was tardy in settling his just demands—you then ask, what the Judge would think if the Defendant's Counsel were to alledge, in bar of the claim, that the Catholic prays to the Virgin, invokes the Saints, and will make a bad use of the money if he gets it, in pulling down the Protestant Establishment—and you insist, that strange as this would seem, we are only acting analogously in denying " an equitable Political Claim."

It will be obvious to every one, that any analogy between the supposed case of Debtor and Creditor, and our own case, in regard to the Roman Catholic Claims, can only be established upon the fact of an actual debt being first shewn to exist between the Roman Catholics and the Protestants.—In the case you put, the pecuniary debt between two parties being first proved, all your subsequent conclusions follow, as necessary consequences; but when you suppose the fact of an existing debt, or obligation, on the part of the Protestants to concede the Romish Claims, your reasoning assumes the shape of a mere *petitio principii*—you beg a question which will not be granted, and then reason from it, as from established premises. I deny your major, namely, that there is any obligation—express or implied—to concede these claims; and, until you can make out this primary position, I must think, with SHAKESPEARE, that you " draw out the thread " of your verbosity, finer than the staple of your argument." In order to make the two cases dovetail, you must suppose a Prisoner in the King's Bench, who having obtained a Day Rule, employs his new found liberty, by going into Court, and

demanding equal rights, and the same portion of liberty, and property, as are possessed by the Judge and Jury—He must be content with the reply, that—not the oppression of the laws, but his own disregard of those laws, and of the rights of his fellow-subjects, when he had the possession of his liberty, placed him within the rules of the Bench, and that honest men must be excused for taking care of themselves.

In your magnanimous contempt of future danger, you observe, “we hear no more of Political danger, and *very little* of *Religious danger*, from the ablest antagonists of concession, in either House of Parliament, but *many* wise and respectable men do apprehend, that the proposed innovation, or some of its results, would sooner or later *break up the Church*, and this was the burden of LORD LIVERPOOL’S late Speech.”—Now—really to my humble apprehension, the *breaking up the Church* can be nothing else than “Religious danger,” and it is not clear to me, upon what principles you can assert, that “we now hear *very little* of Religious danger,”—when, in the same paragraph, you admit, that “*MANY* wise and respectable men do apprehend, that the proposed innovation will, sooner or later, break up the Church,” and that no less a man than LORD LIVERPOOL is one of these many.—I have no wish, Sir, to “make a man an offender for a word,” or I might, perhaps, dwell on this palpable contradiction, but I pass on to the main argument.

You conclude your Fourth Letter, by a formal and direct appeal to the Nation, to consider “whether the CHURCH OF ENGLAND would not be, in all senses, stronger after the passing of the Relief Bills, and after the possible subsequent repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts.”—To begin with the last head first, I observe, that it appears idle to speak of the “possible subsequent repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts,”—because it is evidently no mere peradventure, that if the Romish Claims are conceded, the Test and Corporation Acts must be repealed, as an inevitable consequence. Every man must perceive, even they whose argument it may not suit to admit it, that when Popery, the ancient foe of

British England, of the Church of England, and the Laws of England, shall be admitted to Place and Power, there will not remain a pretence for the exclusion of Protestant Dissent, which will be likely to avail the Advocates of the Test and Corporation Acts for a single Session.—Neither Mr. WILBERFORCE, Sir, nor yourself, can suppose, for a moment, that Protestants of any denomination, will ever solicit of a Protestant Parliament, a boon of so much less amount than what Papists will then have obtained, and yet solicit it in vain—and I put it plainly to that gentleman in particular, whether he could, with any shadow of Political or Parliamentary consistency—even if his Religious and personal feelings would permit him—be found, for an instant, in hostile array against the “purely Civil Claims” of the Dissenters, after he should have done what in him lay to satisfy the claims of the Roman Catholics—Civil—Political—and Religious.

If then your interrogatory, touching the future strength or weakness of the National Establishment, after she shall have thrown down the fences provided by our forefathers—should be permitted to assume the form of an argument, it will be found to amount to this simple proposition—namely—that no possible injury can accrue to the National Church, when the Papists shall have succeeded in overthrowing the Laws, which were deemed necessary at, and after, the Reformation; and when the Dissenters shall have also attained their object in overturning the Laws, which preceded, or followed, the Revolution—a theory, which it is the whole object of my Letters, from first to last, to controvert; with what success, must depend upon the judgment of others, rather than of myself, or of MELANCTHON.

With respect to the merits of the Dissenters Claims, to the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, I do not feel it necessary to encumber my argument, by either vindicating the policy which appears to have occasioned the first enactment of those restrictive Laws, or the necessity which still appears to exist for their continuance, if it be once admitted that it is a duty in any Rulers to uphold, and protect, the

Established Religion of a Nation; but when you enquire, whether the National Establishment of our own country, “derives, at present, any sort of benefit from those Laws, and whether she would not realize immense advantages from the state of things which must prevail in their absence?” I can only point to the practical and intelligible fact, that the Church of England is at present safe, and has been so for a long succession of years, while all before us, in the event of a change in our whole system of policy, being, as in the case of the Romish Concessions, a mere speculation, I think, as a Member of our venerable and tolerant Church, that “our strength is to sit still”—and that as we are commanded, on high authority, not to “meddle with them that are given to change,” so it may probably be also our wisdom, not to permit them to meddle with us.—Not being, myself, able to discover that the Church of England is in the diseased condition, which either the one, or the other of your remedies would suppose her to be, I am, for one, unwilling to administer to a disease, which I cannot be sure exists, lest in an indiscreet attempt to be useful, I may perchance discover, when it shall be too late, that it would have been better for the Patient, if I had never obtruded my advice, or administered my specifics.—I doubt, whether the Church of England requires, either the Plebotomy of Popery, or the Evacuants of Dissent.

In proceeding to shew that the Test and Corporation Acts are “felt to constitute a common bond of union to all classes of Dissenters, for which, on their repeal, no adequate substitute could possibly be found,” you ask, “is it not a fact, that on the last application of the Dissenters for their abrogation, the most wary of their own body actually opposed it, specifically on this ground,”—to which, as the question is asked, I beg leave to answer, with all possible respect, that I believe it is *not* a fact, that any man, or any set of men, on the side of the Dissenters, ever assumed such a line of argument in public; that if such a piece of logic had ever been *propounded*, it would have manifested the most inexplicable,

and indiscreet desertion—in some particular quarter, of the interests of the Dissenters, which are universally held by themselves, to depend upon the abrogation of the Test and Corporation Acts; and that, had any such extraordinary proposition been made, as your question implies, for the continuance of those offensive Laws, it must have been at once disavowed by the Dissenters themselves, as opposed to their entire system of long recognized policy; and, consequently, that such an excepted case could hardly form a legitimate basis, for the inferences which you deduce.

You proceed to ask—if “the annihilation of this bond of ‘union’—the union of various Dissenters with each other, and with the Papists—” would not impregnate the incohesive mass of Dissent, with principles of mutual hostility, and “render the whole, powerless against the Establishment?” Now, not to remark on the improbability, (not to say impossibility), of “annihilation,” “impregnating,” any thing—I apprehend a precisely contrary effect, to that which this quere supposes would follow; in the same manner, and for the same reason, as I should think it most improbable, that if two besieging armies were suddenly to find the gates of a city thrown open to them by the Garrison, they would immediately begin to quarrel with each other, and become “impregnated” with principles of mutual hostility.”—It would rather occur to me, as far more probable, that finding an opportunity, for which they had both so long waited in vain, they would be less likely than ever, to think of falling together by the ears, and would only consider how they might most speedily avail themselves of the advantage which was thus presented to them, in common—of occupying a City, which the folly, or the treachery, of its Friends, had thus abandoned to them, as an easy prey. Thus of the Papists, and the Dissenters—“The Syrians before, and the Philistines behind; and they shall devour Israel with open mouth.”

You next enquire—“is not a change of system involved in “the necessary course of things?” I happen, Sir, to be neither a Necessarian, nor a Fatalist, and I therefore answer in

the negative. I cannot conceive the existence of any dire necessity, under the influence of which, either Nations, or Individuals, are to cast away their confidence in GOD, and plunge into the infidel despair, which you recommend; forgetting, in this manner, the unnumbered mercies which they have received from THE ALMIGHTY, and abandoning the means of defence, which He has been pleased to leave in their hands.

You next ask—"would it not be wise to yield at once, voluntarily, what must be granted at last?" which very palpable, *petitio principii*, sufficiently answers itself, by suggesting a primary question—namely—how does it appear that it "must be granted at last?" If this ultimate necessity cannot be reasonably established, then all the reasoning erected upon such an hypothesis, falls of course; and, in that case, however wise it may be to yield, what must be granted, it will appear to be, the consummation of folly to grant what can be refused without difficulty, and cannot be conceded without criminality.

You conclude your Fourth Letter, by calling upon the Country, as her "true policy—to free the Church from every remnant of intolerance"—by invoking her to "seek to govern an improved state of Society, by meeting its requisitions," and, in that case, you augur, that "we shall hear no more of the growth of Dissent, and the declension of our National Establishment," and you add, "The present age abounds in liberal Institutions, conceived in the purest spirit of Christian philanthropy, and contemplating the highest objects of Christian ambition.—Let the Church of England simply place herself at their head, while they range themselves beneath her banner, and her record shall live, when controversy shall be forgotten." There is so much in this recommendation, in which I can most cordially concur, that I am, involuntarily, induced to exclaim—"O! *ad omnia*."—I wish, as sincerely as yourself, that the Church of England would not be backward to connect herself with certain Societies, which I think, with you, would receive, and reflect, advantage, and honour, from such a connection.—

I believe, most sincerely, that if the Hierarchy, and Clergy, of the Church of England, and their Friends of the Laity, instead of suspiciously standing aloof from the Church Missionary Society, the Prayer-Book and Homily Society, and the British and Foreign Bible Society—instead of assailing those Societies, in Episcopal Charges—Visitation Sermons,—Orthodox Magazines, and Reviews, or Public Speeches—as hostile to the Establishment, and injurious to the Nation—would extend to them the right-hand of fellowship; would protect them when they are right, and instruct them when they err—would love them for their work's sake, and shelter them under the wing of patronage, and kindness, against the storm of Infidelity, and Atheism, which are without—I think, that could all this take place, it were “a consummation devoutly to be wished:” but having gone with you all this length—I there stop—because I cannot imagine, as you do, that the remedy you propose, for any supposed intolerance, or real indifference, of the Church of England towards our Religious Societies, would be found in letting the Papists into Power—I would have the Church liberal towards all Religions, but without being criminally inattentive to her own; and I should not hold it to be any evidence of her piety, as I am sure it would be none of her wisdom, if, in fostering, and supporting, all that is good, and holy, and valuable, in Protestantism, she should stretch out her arms so widely, as to receive the Papists into a division of Power with herself, and place them by her side, on the throne which she at present fills. Such is the kind of latitudinarianism, to which your proposition invites her, but I think, she may patronize all the really deserving Protestant Societies in existence, and all that we may yet have—nay, that she is bound to herself to do so—if it were only on the meaner principle of Policy—without shewing any single act of Political favor, in addition, towards His Holiness the Pope—the Sacred Convocation of Cardinals—the Society de Propagandâ fide—the Colleges of Jesuits, at Stonyhurst, in England, or at Castle Browne, in Ireland—the College of Romish Priests, at Maynooth—or the Holy Roman Vicars Apostolic, of this Protestant Country.

I will also add, with all "plainness of speech," that I fear our Religious Statesmen are not taking the best course, to recommend our Religious Societies to the countenance and support of the Church of England, when they are found advocating the claims of the Church of Rome—and it may be well worthy of their consideration, whether a large portion of the suspicion which has been entertained in certain quarters, in reference to those very Societies, may not, more or less, lie at their door.—At all events the enquiry can do no harm, if, in inducing reflection on the past, it should suggest more caution for the future.

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

AMICUS PROTESTANS.

LETTER XII.

SIR,

I shall now consider your Fifth, and last, Letter, which opens by an assertion that—"the object of the measure, of relieving the Roman Catholics, is "simply, that they may be placed on the same Civil Footing "as Protestants."—It is painful to be obliged to repeat that, although this is the *avowed*, it is not the *real*, object of the measure. I wish to believe, Sir, in all charity, that both you and Mr. WILBERFORCE, consider this to be the real object, or otherwise that he could not vote as he does, and that you could not reason as you do; but be assured, that the real object of the Romanists themselves, in urging these claims, is a very distinct thing from the ostensible one, and their Protestant Advocates would do well to consider this distinction. Both Mr. WILBERFORCE, and yourself, believe, no doubt, that equal "Civil" privileges are all the Roman Catholics desire, and believing as you do, in addition, that these "Civil" advantages will satisfy them, and that the concession cannot lead to such further and other privileges, as will injure us, you

pursue the course which we witness—It will be for others to determine, whether, after the reasons which I have adduced to the contrary, such a view of the subject can be supported.

The three great positions advanced in your Fifth Letter are 1st.—That Protestants, as well as Roman Catholics, have persecuted, and still continue to do so, and that all such persecution (no matter under what form) is an invasion of free enquiry; and a denial of the right of private judgment—that it assimilates the Protestant Church to the Church of Rome, and is equally indefensible in either.—2ndly. That this Policy effectually defeats its own object, and is proved, more particularly in the case of Ireland, to be absolutely useless—and 3rdly. That—[as this proposition is short, and stands denuded of any consecutive reasoning in its support, I will give it in your own words,] “the measure of Emancipation must be carried—“the time is suitable—the Protestant Public is prepared—“all things are ready—and the sooner the thing is done, the better it will be for the Constitution, and PARTICULARLY “FOR THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.”

To begin at the beginning—I shall address myself to your first point, where you observe that Rome, having in the plenitude of her power, the physical means of opposing the Reformation, preferred them to the moral means of argument, and “laid on the blood-hounds of persecution,” in which mistaken conduct, you affirm that she was *followed by the Members of the Reformed Church*, who persecuted in their turn, and that even down to this hour, the system of “setting up human authority in matters of Faith—of imitating the Anti-Christian spirit of Popery, and of interfering for Political purposes, with the consciences of men,” is quite as much the sin and folly of our own Church, as ever it was of the Church of Rome—you represent us, “while the Laws against the Catholics remain in force, as treading in the very steps of the Mother of Abominations, by making our Creed, as she made hers, the test by which the Political situation of Individuals is to be determined;” and you maintain that the

" principle being the same in both cases, her guilt is only
 " greater than ours, as she has had the courage to be more
 " openly consistent than ourselves—she trading with the souls
 " of men—we, stopping short at their Civil privileges."

Now I observe, in the first place, that you assert what you cannot support, when you go the length of affirming, that " Protestants as well as Catholics, have sat upon the Inquisitorial Tribunal; that Catholic, as well as Protestant, Martyrs, have sealed the conviction of the truth of their testimony with their blood,"—and that " Protestants have entailed upon our Protestant Institutions, a stain, and a dishonour, which we have not yet succeeded in completely wiping away." You call this " an undoubted historical fact,"—but I CHALLENGE YOU, IN THE FACE OF THE PUBLIC, TO PRODUCE ANY PROOFS IN SUPPORT OF IT. I am perfectly aware that the Roman Catholics themselves (whose argument you here adopt, and make your own) have honoured with the crown of Martyrdom, and even of Canonization, at Rome, some of the very men who were hung for the Popish conspiracy of the Fifth of November, in the Reign of JAMES I. and I admit that all the writers on the side of the Roman Catholics, would have us believe that every Execution which took place in the Reigns of ELIZABETH, and JAMES I. were " for conscience sake."—I know that the most righteous legal sentences which were executed in consequence of the Political Treasons of those Reigns—especially the first of them—have been stigmatized by the Romish Chroniclers, and even by some Protestant Advocates of the Romish Claims, as so much pure persecution? and that such Reasoners have argued as if they thought that the intriguing Priests and Jesuits, who endeavoured to incite the people to rebellion, by putting in force the Bull of Pope PIUS V. which excommunicated and deposed QUEEN ELIZABETH, and who openly preached sedition to her subjects, were as undoubted Martyrs, under Protestant persecution, as any of the most illustrious Martyrs of the Protestant Church, were such, under Papal persecution when they suffered at the Stake.—Now, although I meddle not with the principle of conscience (however mistaken)

which has led these Priests and Jesuits, or other Political disturbers of the same Church, to make war upon our Protestant Sovereigns, and to violate the Laws of the Country which was protecting them, I must yet deny that they have suffered martyrdom, in the same sense, as those who perished merely for their Religious opinions, and not for manifest violations of the Laws of the Land; and I must further deny that the Judges, or Juries, who hung these political agitators, either occupied the Inquisitorial Tribunal, or brought any stain, or dishonour, upon the Protestant Cause.—There is nothing new in this charge, for it has been repeatedly adduced by the Advocates of Popery—especially by Mr. DALLAS, in his *Modern Defence of the Jesuits*, but RAPIN, BURNET, CAMDEN, and HUME, have all demonstrated the entire absence of Religious persecution in those cases, and the mere infliction of deserved punishment for the commission of the highest Political crimes known to the Law. “The Judges of the Realm affirmed, (says RAPIN) that no person had been made to suffer for his Religion, but only for dangerous practices against the Queen and State.”—Again—“The Enemies of the Queen studied,” (says he) “always to confound two things—namely—Religion, and the crimes against the State, under pretence that most of the Conspirators were Catholics.”—TINDAL’S RAPIN, Vol. 9. p. 36. Edit. 1729. Again—“She is warmly accused of persecuting the Catholics, and putting several to death—It is true, there were some that suffered death in her Reign, but one may venture to assert, that none were punished but for conspiring against the Queen, or the State, or for attempting to destroy the Protestant Religion in England, and restore the Romish, by violent measures. The Catholics who lived in quiet were Tolerated, though with some restraint as to the exercise of their Religion, but with none as to their consciences—IF THIS MAY BE CALLED PERSECUTION, WHAT NAME SHALL WE GIVE TO THE SUFFERINGS OF THE PROTESTANTS IN THE REIGN OF QUEEN MARY?”—RAPIN, Vol. 9. p. 224. Much more to the same purpose may be found in the early part of the same Vol. especially at p. p.

8—10—14—48—and 49. SULLY proves the same fact in his History Vol. 4: Book 5. p. 357. Edit. London, 1768. CAMDEN'S ANNALS throughout, are full of evidence to the same fact. HUME in his History (more especially in the 41st Chapter, Reign of ELIZABETH) has proved to demonstration that—to use his own words—"the Priests who maintained the Catholic superstition in its full height of bigotry, being educated with a view to the Crown of martyrdom, were not deterred, either by danger or fatigue, from maintaining and propagating their principles."—BURNET, in the 4th Volume of his Abridgement of his own History of the Reformation p. 381. (a precious Volume which certain Modern Protestants would do well to study) has a masterly passage upon those times.—My space will only permit me to refer to these different authorities, but a single passage from LORD BACON, occurring in his "Observations on Libel," appears too important to be omitted.—"Of Catholics," (says he) "I mean the traiterous sort of them—a man may say as Cato said of Cæsar, "*cum ad evertendam Rempublicam sobrius accessisset*,"—they came sober, and well advised; to their treasons and conspiracies; and commonly they look not so low as the Counsellors, but have bent their murderous attempts against her Majesty's sacred person, as may appear by the conspiracy of Somerville, Parry, Savage, the Six, and others; nay, they have defended it in their theses, to be a lawful act."

Now, Sir, you have only one escape from this reasoning of our best Historians, and wisest Statesmen, establishing the fact as they do, that Legal Sentences for disloyalty and treason, are not Religious Martyrdom; and that is—again to take refuge in the assertion, that all our refusal of Political Power and Pre-eminence to the Church of Rome; and her Members, is only one continued act of Persecution, alike opposed to the Law of God, and the policy of a Protestant Nation—a position from which I shall not attempt to dislodge you here, as so much has been advanced by me already, in order to shew that such a fastness cannot be maintained for an instant with any colour of sound argument.

I shall, therefore, next advert to the virtual inference which, in common with the Roman Catholics, you draw from this supposed case of Protestant persecution—namely, that Protestants having been, at some time or other, Persecutors, as well as Papists, there is not much to chuse between them; and that we ought to feel quite as easy under the prospect of Popery assuming the reins, as we do under the present system—the fault being, not so much in one or the other Creed, as in human nature when in possession of power—and not being in any case so much the error of the Men, as of the Times in which they have lived.

There is no novelty in all this argumentation—since the celebrated Roman Catholic Lawyer, Mr. BUTLER, has urged it already, and been so compleatly answered by a most respectable Protestant Layman, who is also of the legal profession, that I have little more to do than to avail myself of his powerful reasoning. If (he argues) it could even be fully proved that Individual Protestants had not been faultless in this particular; “the principles of Toleration which allow various sentiments, and modes of faith, are necessarily inherent in Protestantism; and every instance of coercion or persecution in a Protestant, is a departure from his own legitimate principles*, while all Toleration exercised by a Roman Catholic is a departure from the principles of his own Church, which admits no other interpretation of Scripture than her own; denies the right of all other Ministers to officiate in Religious offices; and declares that there is no Salvation out of her own pale.

“We know whence the persecutions of the Church of Rome proceed, because we know that she does not, and, to be consistent with herself, cannot, tolerate other modes of

* That the Church of England is perfectly tolerant, and abhors the employment of force, is proved from her 20th Article—“Although the Church be a mistress and keeper of Holy writ, yet as it ought not to decree any thing against the same, so besides the same, ought it not to enforce any thing to be believed for the necessity of salvation.”

"faith. She considers her mode of faith to be perfect, her spiritual dominion to be universal, and her interpretation of the oracles of God to be unquestionable. She cannot err, and therefore will make the opinions of her sons bend to her authority, and all who dispute that authority, she treats as enemies. If to-day were the first day of giving birth to such principles, it would require no great effort of sagacity to predict, that coercion and persecution would as necessarily flow from them as light from the sun. The practice of persecution would naturally follow intolerance of principle. On the other hand, Protestantism is the Religion of the Bible. It allows that Book to be the standard of faith and practice, and it imposes no specific interpretation of that divine and illuminating volume. Protestantism allows its votaries to bring human creeds to that great touchstone of all truth; but compels none to reduce their interpretation of it to the imperfect and erring standard of human creeds. Whatever Creeds or Articles may be adopted by Protestant Churches, it is quite clear that the distinguishing spirit of Protestantism, and which all Protestants admit, is the right of private judgment in matters of Religion; which is the natural result of making the Scriptures, unmixed by human comments and opinions, the only infallible rule of Christian faith and practice. Where this right is admitted to be the general and indefeasible property of man, as it must be by every legitimate Protestant, the principle of coercion or persecution cannot exist. Therefore, if persecution be maintained or exercised by a Protestant of any denomination, it is in contravention of the principles of Protestantism. You may censure the man, but you cannot blame the principle of Protestantism which he has thus abandoned."

"The very principle of the Church of Rome, as evidenced in the Oath taken by her Bishops, is Persecution. The words are, 'Heretics, Schismatics, and Rebels, to our Lord the Pope, or his Successors, I will to my power persecute and oppose.' Persecution, or coercion, being thus

“ a principle of the Church of Rome, to be exercised as oc-
 “ casion may serve, the circumstances were not accidental
 “ which have occasioned the destruction of millions of lives,
 “ at her instigation, in different ages of the world, for alledged
 “ offences which were merely of a religious nature. The
 “ Church of Rome, admitting no right of Toleration, or Re-
 “ ligious Liberty, must, of necessity, maintain coercion in
 “ matters of Religion, as a principle. This she has done, and
 “ will continue to do, till she recognizes the right of others to
 “ follow their own opinions and sentiments. The present
 “ Pope’s Circular Rescript, of the 5th February 1808, sets this
 “ matter in the clearest light, for he there states, that he has
 “ rejected the article proposed by Buonaparte for granting
 “ the free and public exercise of religious worship to those
 “ who should dissent from the Roman Catholic communion.
 “ Now it is only upon a principle of coercion, or, in other
 “ words, of persecution, that the Pope would have rejected
 “ that article. But we need not rely upon a single act of the
 “ Pope, since it is notorious that nothing is more repugnant
 “ to the principles of the Church of Rome than the Toleration
 “ of other modes of faith.”

Here then lies the essential, and eternal, distinction be-
 tween a Church which, in its very constitution and origin,
 claims the divine right of infallible perfection, and the conse-
 quent power of punishing heresy, when the opportunity may
 permit; and a Church which, like our own, renounces and
 disclaims any such right to punish the Professors of another
 faith, and avows and maintains principles of the most unqua-
 lified Toleration, so far as a different Religious creed or wor-
 ship are concerned; although, from her connection with the
 State, she may no more deem herself obliged to concede cer-
 tain political privileges to every claimant, than she may admit
 her obligation to ordain to Spiritual functions, in her own
 communion, the Members of another Church. In the case of
 the Church of Rome, her Members—especially her Eccle-
 siastical Members—are ranged on the side of persecution as
 an integral part of her creed, whenever the opportunity to

persecute may occur, and all departures from this rule are so many exceptions, arising from the mere necessity of the case. With regard to the Church of England, she is essentially tolerant in her constitution, and openly abhors and rejects a contrary system. Any Minister, or Member, therefore, of our Church, who should become a Persecutor, would find no countenance, or sanction, in such a course, from his own body, which would scorn the employment of those unhallowed weapons. It is in vain that you strive to avoid the consequences of this predicament, by affirming that the refusal of "equal civil privileges" to the Papists is so much positive persecution, since you can only expect the sympathy of the Romanists, or their friends, in attempting to establish such a position: the very phrase of "*civil privileges*" upon which you so exclusively rest, is itself an unfair view of what is really denied; the privileges withheld, being not so much of a merely *civil* character (such, for instance, as protection in person, and property) as of a *political* character—in other words, the equal participation of power and influence in the State. It cannot be too often repeated, that it is for Political rank, and influence—involving, as the Romanists believe—the ultimate possession of Ecclesiastical rank and influence for their own Church—both in its spiritual and secular character—that they have so long sighed and struggled—" *Hinc ille lacrymæ!*" The refusal of these advantages may be branded

* Bishop HURD, than whom few men better understood the principles of Civil and Religious liberty, or the bearing of Popery upon them, observes [Works—Vol. 5, p. 315.] "Bossuet regards the persecution of Heretics as so little dishonourable to his Communion, that he considers it a point not to be called in question—calls the use of the sword, in matters of Religion, an undoubted right—and concludes that there is no illusion more dangerous than to consider TOLERATION as a mark of the true Church—l'exercice de la puissance du glaive dans les matières de la religion, et de la conscience; chose, qui ne peut être requise en doute—le droit est certain—il n'y a point d'illusion plus dangereuse que de donner LA SOUFFRANCE pour un caractère du croye." *Eghe.* Hist. des Var. c. 10, p. 51. Par. 1740, 12mo.

with the name of Persecution by Mr. WILKINSON and yourself, but this will not prove it to be such, nor will the continuance of the same policy by a Protestant Church or State, be to inflict any real injustice, or hardship, upon Roman Catholics. Were it possible to believe that they were merely Petitioners "for conscience sake," or were only claiming the free exercise of their Religion, unfettered by those penalties attaching to its profession, which the fears—perhaps not altogether groundless—of our Ancestors (including Mr. LOCKE in their number) had imposed; there would appear some pretence for further alteration in the existing law, but (to avail myself of the powerful argument of Sir WILLIAM TEMPLE) when speaking of the United Provinces—"No man among them can complain of pressure in his conscience: of being forced to any public profession of his private faith: of being restrained from his own manner of worship in his house, or obliged to any other abroad; and *whoever asks more in point of Religion, without the undisputed evidence of a particular Mission from Heaven, may be justly suspected not to ask FOR GOD'S SAKE, but for his own; which is pretending to sovereignty in opinion, instead of liberty in it.*"

It is therefore, Sir, that I cannot consider the Roman Catholics entitled to the exuberant flow of your feelings in their favor, because they ask *not for God's sake but for their own*—Although the Newspaper, which is so strongly in their interest (the NEW TIMES) has designated the different Petitions of Protestants against their claims as "Petitions against the *Religious Freedom of the Catholics*," I deny that their *religious freedom* has ever been affected, or was ever meant to be; and certainly a more sophistical, and unworthy, colour could not have been given to the opposition of Protestants against further concession, than by such a mode of characterizing that opposition. So far are we from obstructing, or molesting, the Religious freedom of the Roman Catholics, that they not only plant their Colleges, and Nunneries, in the heart of our Protestant empire; but the Chapels for their Idolatrous

worship are occupying, as in defiance, the most public parts of our Capitals. To this I offer no objection, although I have already observed upon the gross inconsistency of Protestants becoming their builders; but, at all events, while Protestants will build Roman Catholic Chapels, and Protestant Statesmen will advocate their claims, in the name of common sense, let us hear no more of PERSECUTION. The opprobrious charge of Persecution, as applied to the supposed injury done to certain Individuals, by refusing them any share in making, or executing, laws for those persons whose Religion they call heresy, and whom they avowedly regard as unworthy of Toleration, would really be deemed an affront to our reasoning faculties, if it did not come recommended under the sanction of great names. The vague and unfounded complaints of the Roman Catholics who are asking "not for God's sake, but for their own"—present a case of imaginary hardship, under which, we must be excused for retaining some portion of that scepticism which, as the present Lord BATHURST has observed, leaves us in some fear of "a notice to quit in favor of new Tenants, before we have got another house over our own heads."

The charge of Uncharitableness, and Intolerance, is a stale accusation. It is thus that the able author of *THE PURSUITS OF LITERATURE* met it, five and twenty years ago; and it is thus that I would meet it now—"I have pity for them, and relief too, according to my ability; but CHARITY is in reality a principle of general safety, of discernment, and of prudence. It originated from Him who commanded his Disciples to assume the innocence of the Dove, and the wisdom of the Serpent. Surely this is not to teach persecution, or intolerance. My language and arguments are designed only to shew that the spirit of the system of Popery yet remains unaltered, in its great and leading principles. I love Toleration, in the constitutional sense of the word, as much as the most designing patriot of the day: but indifference to the public form of Religion is the first step to its neglect, and to its consequent abolition. I cannot think it

" a mark of intolerance, when I deprecate the revival of the
 " Romish Superstition in England. There is an enthusiasm
 " an *οργασμος*, in the professors of it, which I know never for-
 " sakes them. It is active where its influence can hardly be
 " supposed. It surely will be understood I am only speaking
 " of the spirit and tendency of the system itself. I would
 " carry Charity with me in my heart, and in my hand, but I
 " know that Charity is, and must be, consistent with a love
 " to my country, and to her rights civil and religious. I am
 " no enemy to the liberty of discussion, and the toleration of
 " opinions; I am for no literary proscription. But I think it
 " is plainly our interest, as well as our duty (while we yet may)
 " to strive to support that Constitution in Church and State,
 " which has hitherto been able to build us up, and to give us
 " an inheritance, or rather the pre-eminence, among all those
 " who have been strengthened by policy, or sanctified by re-
 " velation. They know their hour, their protectors of noble
 " rank, their opportunity, their advantages, their revenue
 " from the State. They advance by approaches, not desultory,
 " but regular. The Papal genius never sleeps, no, not for a
 " moment; but directs and animates, and acts, uniformly
 " and constantly, at home and abroad, in cities, in towns, in
 " villages; it takes aid from stupidity, and from ability, from
 " above, and from beneath. I have veneration for the truly
 " pious of every persuasion in the Christian faith. " There
 " is one Lord! But I have, and it is an Englishman's duty
 " to have, a watchful eye upon the insinuating, or domineering,
 " spirit of the Romish Church. I have no opinion of the sin-
 " cerity of their attachment to us, or of their gratitude for
 " our favors. I insist upon it they regard themselves as the
 " original and rightful inheritors of our Land, and I call upon
 " the guardians of our Church and State to be watchful. I
 " am not speaking to those who are indifferent about all or
 " any Religion; but to those; who from their station, poli-
 " tical or sacred, should understand the importance of the
 " cause, the interests of Christianity and its purity, the evi-
 " dence of history, the nature, and the essential and unal-

"tered spirit, of the Romish priesthood, and their subtilty
 "and peculiar arts, by persuasion, or by terror, over weak con-
 "sciences. I am speaking to the Governors of Great Britain,
 "to the Ministers of the Crown, who should guard, and who
 "I trust will guard, against the revival of the Romish Church,
 "now working in secret; as well as against the more open
 "and more terrible democracy of some descriptions of the
 "Dissenters. What is said to us all, is said at this hour to
 "Ministers, and Rulers of States, with a more important,
 "and a more sacred emphasis. 'Watch—for ye know not
 "the hour when destruction cometh'." Pursuits of Literature.

I shall conclude this Letter by quoting the sentiments of
 the late BISHOP OF LONDON upon this question, which he
 delivered upon its rejection in May 1805, and which forms a
 striking contrast to the sentiments lately delivered upon the
 same question by the present BISHOP OF NORWICH.

"If," (says the venerable PORTEUS) "the Petition from
 "the Roman Catholics had been for more complete Toleran-
 "tion in matters of Religion, though it can hardly, I think,
 "be more complete than it is, there was not an Individual in
 "the House that would have given a more hearty assent to
 "it than myself, but it was not a Petition for liberty of con-
 "science, it was an application for Political Power, and that
 "Power, I, for one, am not disposed to grant them; because,
 "I believe it would be difficult to produce a single instance
 "when they have possessed Political power, in a Protestant
 "country, without using it cruelly, and tyrannically. And
 "this, indeed, follows necessarily from the very doctrines of
 "the Church, several of which are well known to be hostile,
 "not only to the Protestant Religion; but to a Protestant
 "Government.

"It has been said, indeed, that these are not *now* the tenets
 "of the Church of Rome; that they may be found perhaps
 "in some old musty records; but that they are now grown
 "obsolete and invalid, and are held in utter detestation by
 "the whole body of the Roman Catholics both in England
 "and Ireland. But the musty records in which these doc-

“trines appear, are nothing less than General Councils confirmed by the Pope; and DR. TROY, Titular Archbishop of Dublin, in his Pastoral Instructions to the Roman Catholics of his Diocese, published in 1793, tells his Flock ‘They must adhere implicitly to the Decrees and Canons of the Church, assembled in General Councils, and confirmed by the Pope;’ and the celebrated Lay Roman Catholic writer MR. PLOWDEN, in his ‘Case Stated’ published in 1791, maintains the same doctrines, and the infallibility of General Councils. These are, therefore, unquestionably at this day the tenets of their Church. They have never been renounced or disavowed; and till they are so disavowed by authority, every good Catholic is bound to obey them.

“It is true they have been renounced by certain Petitioners from Ireland, but they can only renounce them *for themselves*; they cannot renounce them for the whole body of Catholics in that country; and this renunciation, besides, comes unaccompanied by *any competent authority*. It is neither authorized by the Pope, by a General Council, by the Bishops, or by their Clergy. On the contrary, it is very remarkable, that *not one of the Clergy* signed the Petition. One cannot therefore help fearing that the same thing may happen in this case that happened in 1793, when the Lords PETRE, STOURTON, and many other Roman Catholic gentlemen, on applying to Parliament for farther indulgence, made the same renunciation of the same obnoxious doctrines that appears in the Irish Petition. The Church of Rome immediately took the alarm, and announced their entire disapprobation of that measure by their Apostolic Vicar in England, who wrote an energetic Letter to those Gentlemen condemning what they had done; which condemnation was sanctioned by the Pope, and by all the Roman Catholic Bishops in this Country, and in Scotland.*

* The object of these Roman Catholic Peers, and of several distinguished Laymen who joined them, was to soften down, by a Public Declaration, the offensive tenets of Popery, but it was immediately met

“ But laying these Doctrines out of the question; there is
 “ one certainly which the Petitioners have not renounced,
 “ and indeed cannot renounce; namely, THE SUPREMACY
 “ OF THE POPE; the acknowledgment of a Foreign jurisdic-
 “ tion. It is contended indeed that this jurisdiction is only a
 “ Spiritual one; but the jurisdiction of a Foreign Catholic
 “ potentate, of any kind whatsoever, must always be a dan-
 “ gerous thing in a Protestant Country. This argument has
 “ I know been considered as of little moment, and treated
 “ with little respect; but in my opinion it is a most alarming
 “ and important circumstance. A Spiritual authority cannot
 “ be wholly separated from a Temporal one. An unbounded
 “ influence over the hearts and consciences of men, in spiri-
 “ tual matters, must necessarily be attended with great in-
 “ fluence in civil, and political, concerns; and when we con-
 “ sider that the Romish Clergy of Ireland have almost absolute
 “ command over their flocks; that the Clergy are appointed
 “ by their Bishops; and that the Bishops are nominated by

by the Counter Declaration in question, stating that the Doctrines they
 professed were not those of the Church, and that no regard was to be
 paid to any such Private Confessions of Faith; in consequence of which,
 most of those very Roman Catholics, afterwards, withdrew their signa-
 tures. Thus also the more moderate of the Roman Catholic Laity, as
 well as many Political Protestants, would long before this have wil-
 lingly conceded the Veto, and other points; but they were soon taught
 another lesson by their Ecclesiastical Superiors—The Pastoral Rescript
 of the Titular Bishop of Dublin in 1793 asserts, that “ it is the funda-
 “ mental article of the Roman Catholic faith, that the Pope or Bishop
 “ of Rome is Successor to St. Peter, Prince of the Apostles: in that
 “ See he enjoys, by divine right, a Spiritual and Ecclesiastical Supre-
 “ macy, not only of honor and rank, but of *real jurisdiction and autho-*
 “ *riety* in the Universal Church”—Dr. Milner also in his Elucidation of
 the Veto observes, that “ one might as well think of plucking a beam
 “ from the Sun, as attempt to pluck a fibre from the Sovereign Spiritual
 “ Authority of the Pope”—In spite of all this, and much more to the
 same effect, we are now expected to believe that “ Catholic Emancipa-
 tion” will either prevent the Pope from issuing another Bull, or else
 prevent his own Bishops, Clergy, and Laity, from honouring it with
 their attention!

“ the Pope, it is easy to see what power this must give him
 “ over the people of Ireland, and in how formidable a manner
 “ at any perilous and awful crisis, that power may be exerted.
 “ But, besides this, it appears ‘from the History of this
 “ Kingdom, that in fact, Roman Catholics and Protestants
 “ have never yet agreed together in administering the powers
 “ of Government; and that England never enjoyed peace and
 “ security, till the ascendancy of one party was established
 “ by the downfall of the other. Where the power of the
 “ Catholics and the Protestants was nearly equal, it was a
 “ constant struggle for superiority. The Corporation and
 “ Test Acts put a final period to that struggle. Since those
 “ Acts passed, the Church of England has enjoyed perfect
 “ security and tranquility. Let us then not part with these
 “ bulwarks of our constitution, civil and ecclesiastical, which
 “ we must do if we grant to the Roman Catholics all they
 “ demand. Let us preserve with care that admirable Con-
 “ stitution, which our ancestors have bequeathed to us;
 “ namely, the Established Church, under the protection of
 “ the State, with a Toleration to all other religious sects and
 “ denominations whatever; but, at the same time, an exclu-
 “ sion of them, by proper tests, from all places of trust, au-
 “ thority, and power. This is the only system that can give
 “ stability and peace to any kingdom where there are dif-
 “ ferent kinds of Religion. It has given stability and peace
 “ to this kingdom. It has been found by experience, which
 “ is better than a thousand theories, to be the soundest policy.
 “ It has left us quiet for above an hundred years; and it
 “ would be the highest imprudence to throw away our best
 “ safeguard for visionary projects of innovation, and improve-
 “ ment, in our civil and ecclesiastical Establishment.”

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

AMICUS PROTESTANS.

LETTER XIII.

SIR,

I now come to the Second Count in the Declaration of grievances comprised in your Fifth Letter—I mean the impolicy, and inefficacy, of what you suppose to be our persecuting system towards the Roman Catholics, more especially in Ireland. I go all lengths, Sir, with you, in holding Persecution to be without excuse, or defence, and with Mr. WILBERFORCE, in supposing it to be “as weak as it is wicked;” but I contend that neither of you have shewn, or can prove, that Protestants are Persecutors, much less by their adherence to the Laws which are essential to their own existence, and can only be surrendered with it. With respect to IRELAND—it is not necessary to my argument to vindicate the entire policy of this country, in all its parts, towards Ireland, for whole centuries; but so far as regards the maintenance of our present laws of restriction, in that country as well as in this, notwithstanding that you chuse to treat them as laws of illiberality and injury, I conceive that no Paternal Government could have changed them, while there was a Protestant Constitution to be maintained, or while there were any Protestant Subjects to be protected; and I cannot admit those laws to have been either framed, or continued, in the spirit of persecution, or hostility, for the reasons I have already adduced in reference to ENGLAND. No candid observer will refer all, or even the greater part, of Ireland’s misfortunes, to the Mother Country, whatever errors she may, possibly, have committed, from time to time. As far back as the reign of Henry VII. LORD BACON, in his History of that Monarch, taking notice of the strong bias of Ireland towards the House of York, observes, that “it was a ticklish and unsettled State, more easy to receive distempers and mutations than England was.” In the reign of Edward VI. BURNET, in his “Reformation,” observes, “In Ireland,

“ though the Kings of England were well obeyed within the English pale, yet the Irish continued barbarous and uncivilized, and depended on the heads of their names or tribes, and were obedient, or did rebel, as they directed them.” In addition to all this incivilization, and the natural tendency to disaffection and disorder, which are here noticed, no reasonable man can doubt that the Religion of Popery has been a millstone round the neck of Ireland for ages ; and in whatever part of Ireland that Religion prevails, she is, even now, groaning under the grossest bondage of Ignorance, which is found to be ever favourable to Mental Bondage, Idolatry, and Superstition ; while the melancholy operation of that attachment to a Foreign Potentate, which is inseparable from the Papal system, has also been, from the earliest period, the bane of the Sister Island. “ The Irish,” (says RAPIN) “ had for the Pope an attachment equal to their ignorance, which was extreme : this disposed them to listen to the solicitations of the Romish Emissaries, who were continually inciting them to rebellion against the Government. ELIZABETH, therefore, was continually watchful upon the transactions of that Island, knowing what was the interest and credit which the Pope, her enemy, had there.” [Vol. 8, p. 260, Edit. 1729.]

This last extract may suffice as a summary of Irish History, from that period to the present. Even Foreigners have noticed this unfortunate hankering after an external jurisdiction, while the more sagacious of them have properly referred it, not to the love of foreign rule for its own sake, but to the desire of finding a Ruler of their own Religion—a desire, not indeed confined to Ireland, but very natural in England, and strongly felt by English Roman Catholics, as well as Irish. The Historian of LOUIS XIV. observes, “ The difficulty of ascertaining how far a Foreign Sovereign should be obeyed, and the pleasure of throwing off a natural yoke, in favour of one of our own choosing, have but too often induced whole Orders of the Religious to serve Rome in preference to their Native Country.” Now, to transfer that allegiance to a Fo-

reigner, which is secured to our own Sovereign by the whole system of British law, in mere deference to this hallucination of Irish Roman Catholics, has not appeared to be very wise, and therefore the sacrifice has not yet been made; and we could still less consent to change our RELIGION, for purposes of compliment, or conciliation; hence the continued dissatisfaction of the Roman Catholics; and hence, Sir, your heavy, but, I think, unfounded, complaints. I fear it will be in vain for me to expect that the Roman Catholics will be satisfied with this or any other explanation of the reasons which have operated with us to keep things as they are, because, as HOOKER has observed, "It is not easy to speak to the contentation of minds, exalted in themselves, but that somewhat there will be always which displeaseth." Fain would we desire, with all sincerity, "to find a remedy, but when you prescribe the plaister of "Catholic Emancipation," we think we hear the caution—

"Lay not that flattering unction to your soul;
 "It will but skin and film the ulcerous place,
 "Whiles rank corruption, mining all within,
 "Infects unseen."

A far readier, more rational, and more scriptural, remedy for the woes of Ireland, presents itself in Evangelizing, and Educating, that fine country. Without the pure Gospel of Christ, the work will never be effected, and therefore the impurities of Idolatry and Superstition should be discountenanced, and not encouraged; their Professors, and Adherents, should be kept in the lowest place, and not exalted to power and eminence; their Hierarchy should not conceive the hope, and be placed within the reach, of ascendancy for their own Apostate Church, nor should their Laity be stimulated to the bad ambition of political intrigue, by the tempting offer of glittering proposals, for their own advancement, when, if they are not the veriest knaves upon earth, they cannot advance themselves, without, at the same time, advancing their own Priesthood, and their own Religion.

When I speak of Evangelizing Ireland, I certainly contemplate a far higher and purer course of Protestant Instruction

than she has ever yet enjoyed ; for, although the National Establishment possesses, within herself, the seeds of all good, and may, even now, receive a direction, and an impulse, which shall do more towards the advantage of Ireland than any other conceivable instrument of usefulness, it is yet in vain to disguise, or to deny, that such effects are not reasonably to be expected from an inefficient, or a non-resident clergy, though it be even of the Protestant Church—from beneficed Pastors, who are “slumbering in a seat by chance their own,” where “the hungry sheep look up, and are not fed”—from “skulls that cannot teach, and will not learn”—in short, from any merely moral Teachers, who reduce the pure, powerful, and life-giving doctrines of the Gospel of Christ, to a frigid and powerless system of Ethics, little better than the Heathens themselves possessed, before the coming of our Lord.—When I speak of Evangelizing Ireland, I certainly contemplate a scrupulous, and conscientious, attention, on the part of our Ecclesiastical Patrons, to the personal fitness of men who are to inculcate the Protestant Faith, and to live according to its doctrines, in a Nation of Idolaters ; and I suppose a requisition, by them, of other qualifications, on the part of Candidates for the holy and honourable office of preaching the Gospel in Ireland, than that they should be merely able to shew a title to employment from the Parliamentary, or Official, services of their Relatives or Friends ; or that they themselves should only have been distinguished by their reprobation of Calvinists, and Sectaries ; their opposition to the Bible Society ; or their polemical zeal in defending the outworks of our common Christianity. Until some other, and better, feeling than has long prevailed, shall operate in the selection of Religious Instructors for Ireland, there will remain abundant cause to fear lest the candlestick of Protestant light and privilege should be removed out of its place, and lest, in the righteous judgment of God, even a corrupt Church may be permitted to become a scourge of the true faith, on account of the practical abuses of our Protestant advantages, in the deplorable neglect of our uninstructed population. So far indeed as the Education of the young is concerned, it is most consolatory to reflect, that much,

very much, has been done, and is now doing in Ireland, chiefly through the medium of the Sunday Schools, which have been, beyond all question, the greatest blessing ever introduced into Ireland. These invaluable Institutions owe their first origin there, as well as their subsequent increase, chiefly to the labours of Mr. THOMAS PARNELL, the son of the late Chancellor of the Exchequer in Ireland, who has been long engaged in the most indefatigable and self-denying exertions for his countrymen, and has lived to see a reward for those exertions, even in this world; to enjoy which, it is not too much to say, that even Princes might resign their sceptres, and Warriors surrender their laurels, and both be gainers by the exchange.

Let this system of Protestant Education receive all possible encouragement from those who wish well to Ireland; and let adequate provision be made, not merely for the formal and nominal, but for the Scriptural and Spiritual instruction of the vast Population of Ireland; and there will yet be every thing to hope. But should Popery derive encouragement, and strength, from the grant of the required concessions, we may bid adieu to the fair and improving prospects which are now opening before us, whether in Religion, or Civilization. Had Mr. WILBERFORCE confined himself to this "cheap defence of nations"—this unequivocal mode of benefitting and blessing Ireland, he would have placed his foot upon a Rock, and have ensured the gratitude and applause of the present, and all future times. Whatever of power, or vigour, can be contributed to the great machinery of Protestant Preaching, and Protestant Education—whatever of facility, and freedom, can be effected in its working—whatever of acceleration can be imparted to its movements—to provide for these objects, would be within the legitimate province of a Protestant Statesman. When however he joins in the popular cry for "Catholic Emancipation," there seems but too just reason to fear that such a hazardous interference may obstruct, or retard, the important operations which are now going on in Ireland; if not effectually interrupt, and destroy them. The Protestant Instructor of the Irish will have a right to say to Mr. WILBERFORCE, in the language of

Holy Writ—"I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down: why should the work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to you?"

That Popery is most afraid of the "labour of love" now going on in Ireland, is evidenced from all her recent movements. The Priests in Ireland employ every effort to prevent the children from going to the Protestant Schools. Dr. Hussey, the Titular Bishop of Waterford and Lismore, published a Pastoral Letter in 1797, in which he reprobates all Protestant places of Education, and particularly the Charter Schools established by Royal authority, where the Children of Roman Catholics are educated, and maintained, gratis.—"Remonstrate," says he, "with any Parent who will be so criminal as to expose his offspring to those places of education, where his Religious faith, or Morals, are likely to be perverted. If he will not attend to your remonstrances, refuse him the participation of Christ's body. If he should still continue obstinate, denounce him to the Church, in order that, according to Christ's commandment, he be considered as a Heathen, and a Publican."

Thus also, THE HIBERNIAN SOCIETY (which was formed soon after the Union, by Protestants of all denominations, for the purpose of establishing Schools in various parts of Ireland, to be conducted by Roman Catholic Schoolmasters, who should use the New Testament as a School-book) states, in a late Report to the British Public, that the Priests had taken the alarm at these Schools, and in their Chapels had anathematized, and threatened to excommunicate, all the Schoolmasters of their Church, who should dare to continue teaching in them, as well as all Parents who should presume to send their Children to them; and they further threatened temporal destruction, as well as spiritual, if these parties should disobey the denunciations of their Priests.

CARDINAL FONTANA, the President of the Society de Propaganda Fide, has lately addressed to the Irish Prelacy and Clergy a Pastoral Rescript, dated "Rome, 18th September, 1819," in which, after stating that Schools have been estab-

lished throughout Ireland, where Peasants and Paupers are infected with the fatal poison of depraved Doctrines, and *where the Bibles of the Bible Society are used, which abound with errors*, he calls upon all the Irish Hierarchy to protect their flock from what he designates the snares of wolves in sheep's clothing—to make every possible exertion to *keep the youth away from these destructive Schools*, and to warn Parents to *prevent their attending them*; and he strongly urges the establishment of Romish Schools through every diocese of Ireland. Does Mr. WILBERFORCE, or does his Defender, seriously believe that the concession of the Romish claims will aid the work of Protestant Education; or rather do they not know, judging from all analogy, that it must inevitably excite increased opposition to the Sunday Schools, and the Bibles in use by them; occasion more Children to be educated as Roman Catholics; and multiply the number of Pastoral Rescripts, Masses, Absolutions, and Indulgences? Such a tale could be unfolded at this moment (from the authentic correspondence of the Sunday School Society in Ireland) of the conduct of the Irish Roman Catholics, in reference to the work of Protestant Education, as would abundantly justify the interposition of our own Government in its protection. I think however that Society has done well to bear, with Christian moderation, the conflict which she has provoked by her good works; and I call not for any undue interference in her favour, although I am persuaded, that if only a small portion of the well-authenticated facts to which I refer, were published, such protection would follow of course; but I do call upon those Religious Legislators who are the natural protectors of Protestant Education in Ireland, not to aggravate existing evils, and not to discourage the hearts, and destroy the hopes, of the best friends of that ill-fated country, by nipping in the bud, or blasting in the ear, the rising, and ripening, expectations which now begin to be formed for the Sister Kingdom. I do conjure them, as they value their own Religion, and as they must answer hereafter for any injury they may inflict upon it, to pause before they proceed to a consummation, which, as it cannot hope for the

blessing of God upon it, can never be advantageous to the best interests of his creatures.

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient humble Servant,
AMICUS PROTESTANS.

LETTER XIV.

SIR,

I now begin to see land, having arrived at the third head, of your last Letter, which forms a compendious summary of your whole argument, and is couched in the following terms:—"The measure of Emancipation must be carried—the time is suitable—the Protestant Public is prepared—all things are ready—and the sooner the thing is done, the better it will be for the Constitution, and particularly for the Church of England." If the first member of this Proposition could be established, namely, that Emancipation must be carried, you might have spared yourself the trouble of noticing the subsequent points. It is recorded of a certain Mayor, that when he had once established the dire disability imposed upon his Corporation, of receiving Queen Elizabeth without the honours of a Salute, because there were no Guns in the place, Her Majesty dispensed his Worship from adducing a variety of other reasons for not firing the Salute, which yet remained to be enumerated. Once shew the dire necessity we lie under, of submitting to our fate, and since we must have our heads cut off, the sooner we are put out of our misery, the better. I have however already endeavoured to shew that this gratuitous assumption of the inefficacy of resistance, is not to be admitted, for an instant. It reminds us of old John Bunyan's well-known scene in Doubting Castle, where the wife of Giant Despair persuades the Pilgrims, that, since they could not hope to escape, they had better destroy themselves at once. It is of a piece with the advice of Job's wife, when she spoke as one of the foolish women, and said—"Curse God, and die!"

and equivalent to the exclamation of him who asked—"Why should I wait for the Lord any longer?"

Let us however set against this language of despondency, the courageous enquiry of NĒHEMIAH—"Should such a man as I flee?"—and let us imitate his holy example—"I said unto the Nobles, and to the Rulers, and to the rest of the People, Be not ye afraid of them: remember the Lord, which is great and terrible, and fight for your brethren, your sons, and your daughters, your wives, and your houses."—"The God of Heaven, he will prosper us: therefore we his servants will arise." We might indeed derive some courage from a profane, as well as from a sacred source—

"Tu ne cede malis; sed contra audentior ito."

With regard to the alledged suitableness of the time for the tremendous experiment to which we are invited, and the fancied preparation of the Protestant Public for their doom—if the whole scope of my argument have not sufficiently shewn that no time can be suitable for National Ruin; and that every true Protestant is bound to do his utmost to avert it—I should despair of advancing any thing, at this late period of the discussion, which might produce the desired effect. For the same reason, I do not stop to remark upon the almost-profane application of "all things" being "ready" for the Gospel feast, to the supposed readiness of those nominal Protestants who are invited by Mr. WILBERFORCE to the Jubilee of "Catholic Emancipation;" nor shall I attempt to prove that the festival to which we are now bidden, must, in the nature of things, turn out to be any thing else than a Love-feast.

Your grand *finale* is—that "the sooner the thing is done, the better it will be for the Constitution, and PARTICULARLY FOR THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND." It may be considered among the anomalies of the present period, that we should have lived to see the day when such an assertion as this could be hazarded by any one in public print, and that any Readers should be expected—I will not say to *believe*, for its writer could hardly have looked for that—but to read, without remonstrance, and contradiction, that the admission of Papists to power, would be advantageous to THE CHURCH OF ENG-

LAND ! It is difficult, on certain occasions, to repress our honest indignation at assertions, which, although they carry their own refutation on their front, as an antidote to the poison they diffuse, do yet suppose such fatuity, and folly, in those to whom they are addressed, as to render them fit recipients of any absurdity that can be proposed to them. It is however as difficult to disprove what controverts itself, as it is to prove a self-evident proposition. I shall therefore content myself with a single extract from a valuable Political work of the old Lord Egmont, which may, I hope, plead my apology for consigning to its fate this precious morçeau concerning the BRITISH CONSTITUTION, and the CHURCH OF ENGLAND; and of which extract it would perhaps not be too much to say, that it applies to more than one argument in the Letters of MELANCTHON.—“ NONSENSE,” says his lordship, “ stands upon its own basis, “ like a rock of adamant; there is no place about it weaker “ than another—the major and the minor are of equal strength “ —its interrogatories admit of no reply, and its assertions are “ not to be invalidated; if it affirm any thing, you cannot lay “ hold of it, and if it deny, you cannot confute it; in a “ word, there are greater intricacies in an elaborate and well- “ written piece of Nonsense, than in the most profound Treatise of Scholastic Theology.”

Having now examined—I trust not cursorily, or perfunctorily—the Letters of MELANCTHON, I shall offer a few parting observations. And, first—let not Protestants be any longer branded by their Brethren of the same communion, for intolerant and persecuting feelings towards their countrymen of the Romish faith; because they can no more admit them to Political power, than to the Religious influence and ascendancy to which they apprehend that power must inevitably conduct.—“ I come not against THEE this day, but against the house “ with which I have war.” As Protestants, we have an irreconcilable quarrel with Popery, as a system of Religious faith, and Human government, but none with its adherents, while they keep the place which the Constitution, and the Laws, of England have assigned them; nor would we re-model that Constitution, or abrogate those Laws, in order to put them into

any better situation, because the change is most likely to place us in a worse. Let us see how the alledged hardship would apply in the case of the Quakers—every man sees, at once, the utter impossibility of permitting Quakers to make laws for members of the Church of England, or to administer those laws in a State, whose public profession of faith is the Religion of that Church. Who supposes however that the Quakers ought to be “*emancipated*,” or considers them under a grievous yoke of disability, and bondage, because none of their number can become Lord Chancellors, and Judges, Members of Parliament, and Privy Counsellors. The Quakers, however, owe no Foreign Allegiance, and admit no external Supremacy—they profess the Protestant faith—and maintain the duty of universal toleration—they circulate no bulls against the Bible, and issue no anathemas against those who read, and disperse it—they have no absolution to offer State Offenders, upon confession to their Priests; nor any dispensations to grant to Political Culprits, upon previous application for that purpose—they retail no indulgences for moral delinquency; nor do they profess to pray out of Purgatory, the man who suffers the penalty of the law for murdering a Heretic. The Quakers are under no such disabilities as the Papists, to prevent their sitting in either House of Parliament, or acting as the Counsellors of the Throne, and the Administrators of the Laws; and yet who expects to find them in either of these situations, or considers them hardly dealt by, because they are kept in their proper places? The Quaker, and the Roman Catholic, enjoy alike the full possession of their Religious privileges; but so long as their Religion is not that of the nation, and is likely to be injurious to it, if its professors should be entrusted with the discharge of Legislative, and Executive functions, so long it is competent to the Nation at large, without any hardship in these respective cases, to say both to the one, and the other—“Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further.” The State does them no wrong in availing itself of their services, so far as it safely can; in return for which, it secures to them protection in person, and property, and the most full and complete Toleration in the exercise of their Re-

ligion ; but to argue from thence that the State is bound to go further—to break down the mounds and fences which the wisdom of antiquity has placed about the Throne, the Church, and the Laws, this is a conclusion by no means deducible from those premises. . The Roman Catholics, personally, have no opponents ; but their Politico-Religious claims have many, because Justice is to be done to two parties—the Protestant, as well as the Roman Catholic, and the measure of justice which you, Sir, would deal out to the Roman Catholic, is likely to prove the height of injustice to the Protestant.

I next observe, although at the hazard of some repetition, that the Religion of error and absurdity, which is intimately connected with the question of the Roman Catholic claims, never ought to be separated from the consideration of those Claims ; nay, I will venture to affirm, with some hazard of being misunderstood, and with more of being misrepresented, that when Protestant Reasoners resolve to rest the defence of the Protestant Church, and State, upon the narrow ground of mere political expediency, they do no adequate justice to the cause which they espouse, nor combat so effectually as they might, the cause which they oppose—their weapons are only efficient when drawn from a higher source.

“ But the sword
 “ Of Michael, from the armoury of God,
 “ Was given him temper’d so, that neither keen
 “ Nor solid might resist that edge.”

It cannot be too often repeated, that the whole Secular system of Popery is built upon its Spiritual corruption ; they are mutually dependent upon, and inseparably connected with, each other ; and the advocates of the Romish claims, aware of this fact, are never better satisfied than when they find an Opponent of those claims, consenting to lay out of the account, the distinction which subsists between the Reformed, and the Romish faith ; in other words, between the Religion of the Bible, which is the word of God, and the religion of Tradition, Superstition, and Error, which the pride and folly of designing men have set up in its place. Let it never be forgotten

by Protestants, that Popery is not only a system of exclusive Policy, but of corrupt Religion. It is not more remarkable for its opposition to Civil Liberty, and Religious Toleration, than it is for the perversion of "the Faith which was once delivered to the Saints." Whoever, therefore, in treating this question, loses sight of this important fact, should be reminded that he quits the vantage-ground on which God himself has placed the cause of Protestantism; and although meaner, and more subordinate, arguments may for a time avail him, he is still fighting off his ground, and acting with considerable disadvantage. If the Protestant Constitution do yet survive the struggle for existence, to which it is now annually subjected, it will be only because the principles of the Reformation come to be better understood by the Public (may I dare to say by the *Religious Public*?) than they are at present, and because those principles are made more prominent in the arguments of Protestants, than they have ever yet been; and if, on the other hand, the Constitution should be at last abandoned to her avowed and implacable foes, it will be, because the advocates and friends of that Constitution have weakened their own cause, by going out against the Goliath of Popery in his secular, rather than in his spiritual character, and by attacking him in his capacity of a Temporal Sovereign, rather than as the Spiritual Head and Ruler of the whole Antichristian world, and as the focus and centre of those abominations, against which Divine Prophecy is manifestly levelled, and against which Protestants have never ceased to protest, from the origin of their Name, and History.

I observe, in the next place, that if I shall have succeeded in establishing the position that *POPERY IS UNALTERED, AND UNALTERABLE*, the present correspondence will not have been without its use. Any further enlargement on this head will be superfluous here, but I shall close all that I have collected upon that part of the subject, with two Extracts from *DEAN MILNER*. "Several persons," says he, "and even some of our leading Senators, suppose that Popery has long since been abundantly meliorated; but I wish *they* may not be nearer the truth, who think that *THE SPIRIT OF PROTEST-*

“ANTISM HAS GREATLY DEGENERATED.” See Preface to 5th Vol. of History of the Church of Christ. Again—“I own it
 “is with much pain, and awful foreboding of consequences,
 “that I have observed some of our wisest and most enlightened
 “Statesmen appear to entertain such sentiments of the present
 “state of the Roman Catholic Religion, as to me are wholly
 “unaccountable, except on the hypothesis, either of almost a
 “total ignorance of both the religious and political parts of the
 “Papal system, or certainly, of an irreverent contempt, and
 “carelessness respecting the one, and a dangerous misconception of the other.” Sermons, Vol 1, p. 30.

In reference to THE SCRIPTURAL DESIGNATION OF POPERY, AND HER PRETENSIONS, on which I have already dwelt so much, I wish finally to enquire of you, Sir, but more especially of Mr. WILBERFORCE, whether, on considering the six first verses of the 17th chapter of the Apocalypse, and the whole of the 18th chapter, you can possibly feel, as Protestants—a single doubt that the Prophetical character there personified, is the Adulterous and Apostate Church of Rome, and that the overthrow there predicted is the destruction of that Church? If this be so (and I anticipate your entire acquiescence in such a conclusion), I again ask whether Christian men can consent, with safety to their own avowed principles, to give political power, and influence, to a corrupt and ungodly system, which is already condemned to destruction, and is only filling up the measure of its iniquities? Is it not notorious that political power has been, from the beginning, the basis and foundation on which the Church of Rome has raised that superstructure of falsehood and crime, which has enabled her, under the name and semblance of Religion, to usurp dominion over the souls and bodies of men; and how, then, can a spiritual and sincere Protestant consistently aid the adherents of the Papacy, in their attempts to acquire political power? If the Romanist himself does not affect to disjoin political, from religious power, with what pretence can you? He neither affects to disbelieve, or deny, that in obtaining political power, he effectually attains his object; and why should this be doubted by Protestants?

With regard to any credit or character which may be sup-

posed to attach to GREAT NAMES, on the side of the Roman Catholics, in this controversy, I am willing to allow all due weight to the argument of authority, but I have not been so "ravished by the whistling of a name," as to shrink from examining the reasonings by which novelties like these are sought to be supported. On looking closely at those reasonings, it has been the conscientious conviction of my mind that they are weak and feeble, as addressed to our old English reason, and our common sense; but it is, above all, upon weighing them in the balance of the Sanctuary, that I have found them wanting. The logic which would advocate the CLAIMS of the Roman Catholics, appears of no better calibre than that which would defend their RELIGION. The reasoning seems to be, in either case, worthy of the cause it would support: indeed, the only matter of astonishment is, that the professors of Evangelical Truth should be found on such a side; and not that, being there, they should find, like SAMPSON, that their strength is departed from them, when they would go out, as at other times before, and shake themselves. In reference to the peculiar imbecility which characterizes the observations of otherwise ingenious and clever men, when supporting the Romish Claims, I can honestly adopt the language of old HOOKER when he addresses certain opponents of his time:—"I must plainly confess unto you that before I examined your sundry declarations, it could not settle in my head to think but that, undoubtedly, such numbers of otherwise right well-affected, and most religiously-inclined minds, had some marvellous reasonable inducements which led them, with so great earnestness, that way; but when once, as near as my slender ability would serve, I had, with travail and care, performed that part of the Apostle's advice to 'try all things,' and was come at the length so far, that there remained only the other clause to be satisfied, wherein he concludeth that what is *good* must be held, there was, in my poor understanding, no remedy, but to set down this, as my final resolute persuasion."

In conclusion—I would once again avail myself of the advantages supplied me by Dr. OWEN, and adopt as my own, the *pious and consolatory* reflections with which he closes the va-

"able work to which I have before referred. "If," says he,
 "we may suppose, what we may justly fear, namely, that the
 "Holy God, to punish the horrible sins and ingratitude of the
 "nations professing the Protestant Religion, should suffer the
 "profession of it, by any means that he shall think meet to
 "use, in his holy permission, to be extinguished for a season;
 "and remove the light of the Gospel from these nations, we
 "may yet conclude two things: First, That it shall issue at last
 "in the advantage of the Church—ANTICHRIST SHALL NOT
 "BE A FINAL GAINER IN THIS CONTEST; his success here
 "will be a forerunner of his utter destruction. The healing
 "of his deadly wound will preserve his life but for a little
 "while; Religion shall be again restored in a more refined
 "profession. There shall ensue thereon no new Revelations,
 "no new Doctrines, no new Scriptures, no new Ordinances of
 "Worship. The substance of the Protestant Doctrine, Re-
 "ligion, and Worship, shall be preserved, restored, beautified
 "in themselves, and in their power, in them by whom they
 "shall be professed. Secondly, in the meantime, to suffer for
 "it, even unto death, is the most glorious cause wherein we
 "can be engaged, and wherein we shall be undoubtedly victo-
 "rious. It is no less glorious in the sight of God, no less ac-
 "ceptable with him, to suffer, in giving testimony against the
 "abominations of the Apostate, Antichristian Church, than to
 "suffer for the Gospel itself, in opposition to Idolatrous Pa-
 "ganism."

In harmony with this consolatory prediction, are the pro-
 phetic words of the dying SYDNEY. "God will not eventu-
 "ally suffer this land, where the Gospel has of late flourished
 "more than in any part of the world, to become a land of
 "graven images; he will stir up witnesses of the truth, and in
 "his own time, spirit his people to stand up for his cause, and
 "deliver them. I have lived in this belief, and am now about
 "to die in it."—I think, Sir, that even you will not deny
 that the standing up for the cause of God, here adverted to,
 must have intended something else than THE CONCESSION OF
 THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CLAIMS.

I conclude these letters with the last words of that illustrious

martyr, LORD RUSSELL, whose strenuous support of the Bill of Exclusion, (which was designed to prevent the accession of that Popish Monarch, JAMES II.) is now agreed, on all hands, to have been the occasion of the costly sacrifice which was made of England's best blood, by his unjust execution—"I believe that Popery is breaking in upon this nation, and that those who advance it, will stop at nothing to carry on their design. I AM HEARTILY SORRY THAT SO MANY PROTESTANTS GIVE THEIR HELPING HAND TO IT; but I hope God will preserve the Protestant Religion and this Nation, though I am afraid it will fall under very great trials, and very sharp sufferings."

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

AMICUS PROTESTANS.

FINIS.

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JAN 31 1956



